

A  
DISCOURSE  
ON THE  
Great Duty  
OF  
MORTIFICATION.

---

By the Right Reverend  
EZEKIEL HOPKINS,  
Late Lord Bishop of *Londonderry*.

---

*Never before Published.*

---

L O N D O N,

Printed by W. B. for J. Robinson, A. and  
J. Churchill, J. Taylor, and J. Wyat.  
M D C C I.



V  
t  
o  
is  
b  
p  
a  
ce  
an  
eq  
D  
fin  
ma  
Go  
the



---

The Publishers  
ADVERTISEMENT.

**W**HAT has been said in the former Volumes of Discourses of this Right Reverend Authour, may be now repeated concerning this his excellent one of MORTIFICATION; viz. That it is truly His, and not fathered upon him for any base Ends: For upon the perusal of it, it will be apparent to all that are acquainted with his excellent Writings, that the Matter, Style and Accuracy observable in this, are equal to what appears in any of his Discourses that have been published since his Death: And therefore this may serve for a Testimony that it is Genuine, and also for an Apology for the Publication of it.

11 MAY

M

I

I

tun  
liv  
Gr

A  
 DISCOURSE  
 ON THE  
 Great Duty  
 OF  
 MORTIFICATION.

---

Rom. VIII. 13.

*If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

**I**N these words, without any Preface or account of their Coherence, are,  
*First*, A Promise; the greatest Promise that God can make, or the Scripture propound, or we embrace, *Ye shall live*: that is, *First*, Ye shall live a life of Grace and Comfort here; And *Secondly*, Ye shall

1.

A 3

shall

shall live a life of Immortality and eternal Glory hereafter.

II. *Secondly*, We have the Condition upon which this Life both of Grace and Glory is propounded; *If ye mortifie the deeds of the Body, & shall live*, the word signifies to kill or put to death, *If you kill the deeds of the Body, ye shall live*: The Life of Sin and the Life of Grace and Glory are utterly inconsistent and repugnant, you must live upon the Death of Sin.

I. Now here we have the Object of this Mortification, what it is they must put to Death, and that is the *deeds of the Body*. By the Body we must here understand the same that the Apostle speaks of in the beginning of the Verse, *If ye live after the Flesh*; Flesh and Body are but equivalent terms, both of them signifying one and the same corruption of Nature. Indeed the proper Seat of Sin is the Soul, and they are the deeds of the Soul that we must chiefly mortifie; the deeds of the Body are sinful but at the second hand, as they are swayed and exerted by a sinful Soul; yet the Scripture doth frequently call this Corruption Flesh, the Body, the Members; opposing it to the Spirit, to the Mind, *Rom. 7. 23. I see another Law in my Members warring against the Law of my Mind*. And this it doth,

I.  
*Sin hath a  
degrading  
malignity in  
it.*

*First*, To denote the degrading malignity that there is in Sin, it doth unspirit and unsoul a Man. A Sinner is called a carnal Man, a Man made up of nothing but a lump of dull Flesh, kneaded together with-  
out



out Spirit, without Life. And therefore the Apostle doth not bid them mortifie the deeds of their Souls, because wicked Men act as though they had no Souls, or at least not so noble a Soul.

Secondly, It calls Sin *the deeds of the Body*, to denote what it is that Sin tends to; it is only to please, to pamper the Body, the sensual, fordid and baser part of Man. The Soul of a wicked Man acts for no higher an end than the Soul of a Beast doth; the Soul of a Beast acts not for it self, but is made a drudge and underling to the Body; it serves only to carry the Body to and fro to its pasture, and to make it relish its food and fodder. Thus truly it is with the Souls of wicked Men, they act not for themselves, but are only their Bodies Caterers, that seek out and lay in *provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*, Rom. 13. 14.

2.  
*Sin tends only to the Pleasing of the Body.*

Thirdly, Sins are called *the deeds of the Body*, because though the Soul be the chief seat of their abode, yet the Body is the great instrument of their acting? Rom. 6. 19. *As ye have yielded your members servants to iniquity, so now yield your members servants unto righteousness.* Indeed there are some refined Sins that hold little communion with the Body, and partake but little of that gross Carnality and Corpulency (if I may so term it) that makes other Sins swell to such a bulk, and yet these must be also mortified, and these are also *the deeds of the Body*; because the Soul acting even these spiritual Sins, acts as much

3.

below it self, as the Body's actings are below the Soul's.

As for the *deeds of the Body*, by Deeds we must understand not only the inward ebullitions and the outward eruptions of this Body of Sin, but also the spring and fountain it self whence these flow. The corruption of Nature it self must be mortified, the Body of Death must be put to death. All these are called *the deeds of the Flesh*, not only those that the Apostle reckons up and tells us are manifest, *Gal. 5. 19.* but also the inward motions, yea, the depraved root and habit it self; which are secret, because though these be not outward acts, yet they would be so, and Sin is not perfected nor finished till it be so.

II. *Secondly*, As the deeds of the Flesh are the Object of Mortification, so here we have the Persons on whom this duty of Mortification is press'd, *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie*; that is, ye who have received the Spirit, ye who are Believers; for such are those whom he describes in the foregoing part of the Chapter, *ver. 1, 5, 10, 11.* both these branches are comprehended in the condition required to Life, *If ye mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

III. *Thirdly*, Here is likewise the way and means whereby Believers are enabled to mortifie the *deeds of the Body*, and that is, *through the Spirit*; *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie.* Whatsoever other helps either of outward or inward rigour and severity Men use against their Lusts, they may

may indeed thereby for a time stifle and suppress them, but if the Spirit of God do not set in with the work, it can never amount to a true Mortification.

Now from the words thus opened many Propositions may be drawn out, as,

*First*, From the promise of Life, if we *First Doctr.* take Life for the Life of Comfort, and the *vine.* Life of Grace, made upon the Condition of Mortification; observe,

That it is impossible for that Soul to have lively Comforts and lively Graces, whose Lusts are lively and unmortified.

There is a necessity for it, that the *deeds of the Body* be put to death, if you intend that either your Grace or your Comfort should survive. I do not absolutely say that Grace cannot live in the Children of God under every present neglect of Mortification, but yet certainly this will destroy their Comforts; yea, and eat out the vigour, activity and liveliness of their Graces, that though they do live, yet they will live but a lingring and decaying Life; they will but live such a Life as Sin doth in those who exercise a constant Mortification, that is, they will but live as it were a dying Life.

*Secondly*, If we take the Life promised for eternal Life, then observe, *Second Doctr.*

That the future Life of Glory is infallibly assured to the present Death of Sin.

If ye mortifie, ye shall live; not that Life proceeds from Mortification, as the Effect from the Cause, but only it follows upon it as the end upon the use of the means,

*Thirdly*,



Third Doctr-  
ine.

Thirdly, From the Persons on whom this duty of Mortification is press'd, observe,

That Believers themselves who are freed from the reigning power of Sin, have yet continual need to mortifie the inherent remainders of it.

Fourth Do-  
ctrine.

Fourthly, From the aid and assistance that Believers must call in to this work; observe,

That whatever advantages Men have gained against their Lusts, either in suppressing their motions, or in restraining their eruptions, yet if this be not from the working of the Spirit of God in them, it is not true nor right Mortification; *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie.*

I shall not handle all these Propositions, but only the third, That the Children of God have continual need to exercise Mortification; and the other Points will be subservient to the prosecution of this.

This the Apostle urgeth *Colos. 3. 5.* where he speaks to those that were *risen with Christ*; as you may see *v. 1.* to those who were *dead with Christ*, and whose *Life was hid with Christ in God*, *v. 3.* to those who shall certainly *appear with Christ in Glory*, *v. 4.* and yet such as these are he commands to *mortifie their members which are upon the earth.* And it may appear strange if you consider what Members they are which must be mortified; not vain Thoughts, deadness of Heart, uneven Walkings, and those inward Sins, which if Men did thoroughly mortifie, they would be made perfect, and become even as the Angels of  
God;



God; but they are the great and the visible Limbs of the old Man; they are *fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence, covetousness*; and in v. 8. he bids them again, *put ye off all these, anger, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, and lying*. Strange it is, that Believers of so eminent a rank should need calling upon to mortifie such gross and foul Sins as these, and yet it is no more than necessary. The best Christians on Earth have a stock of Corruption in them, which doth habitually dispose them unto these Sins as great and hainous as they are; and the Devil will so suit his temptations, as will certainly draw forth this Corruption into Act, unless they keep a strict hand, and a strict watch over themselves in the constant exercise of Mortification. And therefore as we urge it upon wicked Men, that they slight not Sin because it is small, and say, *is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?* so we must press it upon the best and greatest of Saints, that they would not slight any Sin because it is great and hainous; and say with themselves, Is it not a great, one and my Soul shall never commit it? As we presume upon the pardoning Mercy of God in the commission of small Sins, so we are apt to presume upon our own strength to preserve us from the commission of great and crying; and so by their security and carelessness the best do sometimes find themselves surprized by them. If we should be earnest in exhorting you to beware that you murder not,  
that

that you blaspheme not, that you turn not from Apostates the profession of your Religion; would you not reply with *Hazael*, *Are we Dogs, that we should do this great wickedness?* Yes certainly, this great Wickedness you would do, yea, there is no Abomination so abominable which you would not do, if you do not bring the Cross of Christ into your Hearts by a daily Mortification.

But I see before I can proceed farther I must lay down this for a general Principle, That all Mortification is the weakening of Sin in respect of some Strength and Power that it formerly had over the Soul.

Now there is especially a threefold Power observable in Sin.

1. *A Damning Power in Sin.* First, Its damning and condemnatory Power, whereby it makes the Soul liable to wrath.

2. *A Ruling Power in Sin.* Secondly, Its ruling and reigning Power, whereby it keeps the Soul under a wretched slavery and vassalage.

3. *A Captivating Power in Sin.* Thirdly, Its in-dwelling and captivating Power, whereby through its continual assaults it oftentimes breaks in upon a Christian, beats him from his Defence, batters his spiritual Armour, routs his Graces, wafts his Conscience, and at last leads him into a woful, and it may be a long Captivity.

Now according to this threefold Power, so we must likewise distinguish of a threefold Mortification of Sin.

1. *Sin mortified in its condemning Power.* First, There is a Mortification of Sin, as to its condemning Power. *There is there-*

therefore now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1. Sin, though it may still hale us before God, and make our Consciences confess guilty, yet it cannot now cast and sentence us if we believe; it is still strong enough to drag us before God, to accuse us to God, to affright and terrifie Conscience; but it is not strong enough to drag us into Hell, to adjudge us to everlasting Wrath; it hath lost its Power in that respect, and is become a weak and mortified thing. Whence is it that Sin hath its condemning Power but from the Law? *The strength of Sin is the Law*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. Had not the Law threatned Condemnation to the Trans-gressour, Sin could have had no strength at all to condemn him. But is this Sentence of the Law still in force against Believers? No, says the Apostle, *we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held*, Rom. 7. 6. and if the Law's Power to condemn Believers be dead, Sin's Power to condemn them, which was but only borrowed from the Law, must certainly be dead also. But how came the Law thus mortified? The Apostle tells us in *Colos. 2. 14.* that Christ *took it out of the way, nailing it to his Cross*; and no wonder then if it be dead: that is, the Cross and the Sufferings of Jesus Christ have so fully satisfied for those who believe, that the Law is as it were now dead, and hath no strength nor power left to condemn them. But this is not that Mortification I intend to speak of, nor which my Text exhorts us to: Therefore,

Secondly,



2. Secondly, There is a Mortification of Sin in respect of its reigning Power. What saith the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 11, 12. in v. 11. saith he, reckon your selves to be dead to sin*: What then? Why upon this he founds an Exhortation in *ver. 12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal Bodies*. Now this Reign of Sin consists not in the multitude, greatness, or prevalency of Sins, for all these are consistent with a state of Grace, and may be in a Child of God, in whom Sin doth not nor cannot reign; but in the in-being of Sin without Grace, whether it acts more or less violently, yea, whether it acts at all or no, yet if the habit of Sin possess the Soul without any principle of Grace implanted that is contrary to it, that Man may be said to be still under the Dominion of Sin. Now then this Mortification of Sin as to its reigning Power, is compleated in the first act of Conversion and Regeneration; for in that very instant that any is born again, he hath a Principle of Spiritual Life put into him; the habit of supernatural Grace, which lusteth against the Flesh, weakens the whole Body of Sin, crosseth and contradicts every corrupt motion, so that though he cannot do what he would, yet he would not do what he doth; and this breaks the Tyranny of Sin, and mortifies it as to its reigning Power.

3. Thirdly, There is a Mortification of Sin in regard of its captivating and in-dwelling Power. And this is that which the Text chiefly aims at.

Corruption



Corruption wheresoever it is doth not use to lie dormant, but where it cannot reign there it will molest: Stir, and struggle, and fight it will, and it may be prevail to a victory, even over those over whom it shall never prevail unto Condemnation. This now calls for a constant work of Mortification; every day and hour there are corrupt propensions to be reined in, sinful thoughts to be struggled against, sinful motions to be suppress'd; and it is not the mere habit and principle of Grace, without a vigorous and continued exercise of it in a way of Mortification; that indeed gave Sin its death's wound in our Regeneration, but still we must follow it, doubling stroak upon stroak, while it hath any Life and Motion in it. We do not content our selves that we crush the Head of a Serpent; no, but while it stirs and writhes it self we still lay on. So should we do with Lust; 'tis not enough that the Head of it is crush'd, that its first wound in our Conversion is incurable; but still as long as it stirs and moves within us, we must be continually striking at it by continued acts of Mortification; nor must all suffice till Death comes in to our part, and by one Blow destroys it.

In these three senses Sin may be said to be mortified: In its Condemning Power; and so it was at once mortified for all the Elect by Christ hanging on the Cross: and this Mortification is particularly applied to them when they believe. In its Reigning Power; and so it is mortified in the first moment

moment of Regeneration, by the implantation of an active Principle of Grace and Holiness, which dissolves its Government, and frees the Soul from its Dominion. And lastly, in its Captivating Power, as it rebels and makes an insurrection against the Sovereignty of Grace; and so it is mortified by weakning its forces, hindring its inroads, resisting its assaults, beating down its first risings and motions, and all this by constant, careful and sincere endeavours, even all our days.

I might now easily demonstrate in several particulars how absolutely necessary it is, even for the best and highest Christians, to keep up the constant exercise of Mortification. Take only some few.

I.  
An unmortified Course  
frustrates  
the end of  
Grace.

*First*, In an unmortified course you frustrate the very end of your Graces. Hath God implanted in you a noble, active and divine Principle, that will certainly in the end prove victorious if it be employed? and will you while Lusts and Temptations are overrunning your Souls, and making a prey of you, will you, I say, check it, and keep it under a restraint? Grace hath in it a natural antipathy and repugnancy against Sin, and would where it hath its free scope naturally and necessarily destroy it. *Galat. 5. 17.* the Apostle tells us *the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit*: And what, doth the Spirit sit down tame and quiet under such an affront and opposition? No, saith he, *the Spirit also lusteth against the Flesh*. It doth no sooner see a Corruption begin to heave and stir in the Heart, but it would be presently

sently upon it, it would beat it down and keep it under, did not your deceitful Hearts betray it, or did they but concur with it. Now consider,

*First*, Is not this a foul piece of ingratitude and disingenuity against God, the God of all Grace? He seeing thy weakness and impotency to deal with those mighty Corruptions that storm, rage and domineer within thee, hath sent thee the Auxiliaries and Succours of his divine Grace to aid thee; and thou either turnest treacherous, and deliverest them up bound to be abused, yea if possible to be slaughtered by thy Lusts; or else cowardly desertest them in the Combat. How canst thou answer it to God, that thou goest the way not only to betray thine own Soul to ruine, but his Grace, that Grace that doth so naturally oppose, and would in the end infallibly subdue all the Corruptions thou struglest with?

*Secondly*, Is it not desperate Madnes and Folly to neglect or hinder that which would side with thee, and fight for thee? Alas! the quarrel is not Grace's but thine; and it is no less than thine eternal Salvation or thine eternal Damnation about which this War is commensed. When Corruption comes up against thee in a full Body, and the Devil in the Head of it leading it on, dost thou think thou canst of thy self stand against these many Legions? and yet shall Grace stand by and proffer thee a sure aid, and thou refuse or neglect it? What else is this but to make void the use and



office of Grace, and to be injurious to the Goodness of God, who hath therefore given thee Grace to this very end, that thou shouldst employ it against thy Lusts? That's the first thing.

II.  
*The neglect  
of Mortifi-  
cation weak-  
ens and  
wastes Grace.*

*Secondly*, Unmortified Sin doth not only frustrate the end and use of Grace, but what is worse, it doth also miserably weaken and waste Grace. It is impossible that both Grace and Corruption should at once be strong and vigorous in the same Soul; if the one thrive the other must needs languish, if Corruption prosper and be well-liking, Grace must needs pine away into a Consumption. They are like Plants growing together in the same Soil, that have a mutual antipathy, they cannot both flourish at the same time. If a Garden be overrun with Weeds, they choke up and starve the profitable Herbs, that they cannot live there; and why is it, but because they draw away the sap and moisture that should feed them? So is it with Grace and Sin in the Soul, if thy Soul be overspread with unmortified Sins, like so many stinking and hurtful Weeds sprouting up in it, Grace must needs decay and wither, for it cannot have its sap to nourish it.

Now there are two things that do as it were nourish Grace unto a mighty encrease both of strength and beauty, and they are holy Thoughts and holy Duties. A Man ordinarily needs nothing more to strengthen him but Food and Exercise: Holy Thoughts are as it were the Food of Grace, that provision that we are always to lay in



to sustain it in life; and holy Duties are as it were its Exercise, whereby Grace is breathed and preserved in health. But now an unmortified Lust hinders Grace from gathering strength from Thoughts or Duties. For,

*First*, An unmortified Lust doth usually sequester a Man's Thoughts to it self. How doth such a Lust summon all the Thoughts to attend upon it; some it sends out upon one errand, and some upon another, and all must be busied about its object. Where Covetousness, or Pride, or Wantonness are the unmortified Sins, how is the Imagination crouded full of Thoughts that are making provision for these Lusts? Some fetch in their Objects, and some beautifie and adorn them, and some buz and whisper the Commendations of those Objects to the Soul; nay, and lest any Thought should be vacant, some it will employ in fancying Fictions and Chymeras; things that never were, nor are like to be, if they have but any tendency to the feeding and nourishing of that Corruption. I appeal to your own experiences for the confirmation of this. And this indeed is a good mark whereby we may find out what is our unmortified Sin: See what it is that most of all defiles your Fancy, that the stream and current of your Thoughts most run out after. Do your Thoughts, when they fly abroad, return home loaden with the World? Do they ordinarily present to you fantastick Riches, Possessions, Gains, Purchases, and still fill you with Contrivances

how to make them real? then Covetousness is your unmortified Lust. Do they dwell and pore upon your own Perfections? Can you erect an Idol to your selves in your own Imaginations, and then fall down and worship it? or do your Thoughts like Flies pitch only upon the Sores and Imperfections of others? then your unmortified Sin is Pride. And the like trial may be made of the rest. Now, I say, when an unmortified Lust hath thus seized all the Thoughts, and prest them to the service of a corrupted Imagination, Grace then wants its Food, 'tis ready to be starved, and no wonder if it languish and decay. And,

*2. Unmortified Sin hinders the Life of Duty.*  
*Secondly,* An unmortified Lust doth much hinder and interrupt the Life, Vigour and Spiritualness of holy Duties; and this it doth two ways: Either by deadning the Heart through the guilt of it, or by distracting the Heart through the power of it.

*I. Unmortified Sin deadens the heart in Duty.*  
*First,* An unmortified Lust deadens the Heart in holy Duties through the sense of the guilt of it lying upon the Conscience: Alas! how can we go to God with any freedom of Spirit? how can we call him Father with any boldness, while we are conscious to an unmortified Lust that lies still at the bottom? Speak, do not your Consciences fly in your Faces, and even stop your Mouths, when you are praying, with some such suggestions as these? What! Can I pray for pardon of Sin, for strength against Sin, who yet do harbour and foster a known Lust unmortified? Do I beg Grace against Sin, and yet maintain a known Sin? What!

What! Dare I beg Grace to have it abused, to have it baffled, to have it destroyed by this Sin of mine that is yet unsubdued? Is not such a Prayer mere Hypocrisie and Dissimulation? Will the Lord hear it? or if he doth hear it, will he not count it an Abomination to him? You now whose Consciences thus accuse you, do you not find such Reflexions to be a great deadning unto Duty, such as clip the Wings of the Spirit, and take off the Wheels of the Soul, that it can drive on but heavily and slowly? Certainly Guilt is the greatest impediment to Duty in the whole World, it takes off from the freeness and filialness of our Spirits, and fills us with Distrust, Diffidence, and a slavish Fear of coming before God, rather as our Judge than as our Father.

Secondly, An unmortified Lust hinders holy Duty, by distracting the Heart through the power of it. It draws away the Heart from God, it entangles the Affections of it, it scatters the Thoughts, it discomposeth the whole frame of the Soul; so that at the best it proves but a broken and a shatter'd Duty. And herein lies the cunning of *Satan*, that if there be any Corruption in the Soul more unmortified than another, that Corruption he will be sure to stir up, and interpose betwixt God and the Soul in the performance of Duty. Now when Lust thus hinders Duty, Grace hath not its breathing nor exercise, and no wonder if it grow faint and decay. That's the second thing.

2. *Unmortified Sin distracts the heart in Duty.*

Thirdly, Some foul and scandalous actual



al Sin lies at the door of a neglected Mortification. Do we see a Professour at any time break out into the Commission of some notorious Wickedness, what can it be imputed unto but that Corruption took advantage of his neglect of Mortification? When inward motions are suffered perpetually to sollicite, tempt and importune the Soul, it is a sad sign that Lust hath already gained the Affections; and could Conscience be laid asleep, nothing would hinder it from breaking out into act: And alas! when all the work of Restraint lies meerly upon Conscience, it is a great hazard to that Soul, lest the violence of Temptations, and the importunity of Occasions, or some other advantage that Lust gains, do not force its Guards, and break out to the eminent provocation of God, and scandal of Religion. And therefore beware you do not license Corruption to stir and act within; you cannot set it bounds, nor say to it, Thus far shalt thou go and no farther; thou shalt go as far as Thoughts, as far as Fancy, but Conscience, look thou to it, that it proceed no farther. If you would therefore secure your selves from this danger, mortifie Lust in the very Womb, there stifle and suppress the motions and risings of it, otherwise you know not to what a prodigious height of Impiety it will grow. The least and most inconsiderable sinful Thought tends to an infinite Guilt. An unworthy and unbecoming Thought concerning God tends to horrid Blasphemy; every lascivious Thought to open

open Uncleanneſs, every envious Thought to bloody Murther; and unleſs Mortification be daily exerciſed to ſuppreſs and beat down theſe motions, you know not into how many Soul-deſtroying Sins they may hurry you.

*Fourthly*, One unmortified Luſt doth mightily alienate the Heart from its Acquaintance and Communion with God. God and the Soul grow eſtranged as ſoon as any unmortified Sin and the Soul grow familiar. What God ſaith, *Ezek. 14. 5.* concerning the Idols of the Houſe of *Iſrael*, the ſame I may ſay concerning Mens Luſts, which while unmortified are as ſo many Idols ſet up in the Heart; *They are all eſtranged from me through their Idols.* And yet theſe very Men of whom God thus complains, as being grown Strangers to him, we find them in the firſt verſe crowding about the Prophet to enquire of God by him; they come to him, and yet are eſtranged from him. Such is the wonderful malignity of unmortified Luſt, that it makes Men Strangers to God, even when they are neareſt Attendants upon him. There are but two things that keep up Acquaintance between God and the Soul.

4.  
*Unmortified Sin alienates the Heart from its Acquaintance with God,*

*Two things keep up Acquaintance betwixt God and the Soul.*

*First*, On God's part, the gracious Communications of his Spirit, through which, by enlightning, enlivening, ſupporting and comforting Influences, he converſeth with that Soul to whom he vouchſafes them. And,

1.  
*On God's part, the Communications of his Spirit.*

*Secondly*, On our part, the Spiritual frame of the Heart, whereby it doth with an holy

2.  
*On our part, a Gracious frame of Heart.*

ly Delight, Freedom and Frequency converse with God in the returns of sincere and cordial Obedience.

But now an unmortified Lust breaks off this Acquaintance as to both the parts of it.

I.  
Neglect of  
Mortifica-  
tion pro-  
vokes God to  
suspend the  
influences of  
his Spirit.

*First*, It provokes God to suspend the influences of his Spirit, and so to cut off the intercourse on his part, *Isai. 57. 17. For the Iniquity of his Covetousness was I wrath, and smote him: I hid me, and was wrath.* So truly in the day of our Desertion, whether it be in respect of Grace or Comfort, it is for the iniquity of such or such an unmortified Sin that God is wrath and hides himself. Think you that God will so debase himself to be in the same Heart an Inmate with Lust, when that shall be regarded and he slighted, that attended and he neglected? Will not this provoke him to call in the influences of his Grace and depart? Wherefore else is it that Christians do so often complain, that God is unto them but as a Stranger, and as a Way-faring Man, that turneth aside to tarry but for a night, nay for a moment; that God is not unto them as in the days of Old; that those quicknings, revivings, supports and comforts are now lost, which before they enjoyed, and they become as the Heath and Wilderness, barren as to Grace, and parched as to Comfort? If they look inward in this case, will they not find some Iniquity regarded, some Sin allowed and indulged to be the cause of all this? Certainly if Mortification doth neither strike at this  
Root



Root of Bitterness, nor lop off its Branches, it will spread it self over the whole Soul; and intercept both the light of God's countenance, and the influences of his Spirit.

Secondly, One unmortified Lust doth mightily untune the Soul, and disorders the Spiritualness of that Frame and Disposition which it should be kept in, if we would maintain Communion with God. 2. *Unmortified Sin unfits the Soul for Communion with God.* Look how estrangement and distance grows between familiar Friends; so likewise grows the estrangement between God and the Soul: If a Man be conscious of any Injury that he hath done his Friend, this will make him afraid and ashamed to converse with him, less free and less frequent in his Society: so it is here in this case, an unmortified Lust fills the Soul with a guilty shame arising from the consciousness of an Injury done to God: this guilty shame is always joined with some degrees of a slavish and base fear of God who is thus wronged. Both these take off from that holy Freedom, which reverently to use towards God, is the great Privilege of a gracious Heart in its Communion with him. And this lessens that sweet and unspeakable Delight which formerly it could enjoy from the Intimacy, Freedom and Spiritualness of this Fellowship. And all these do finally cause a shyness, distance and estrangement in the Soul towards God. The root of all this is still in some unmortified Lust which is the occasion of the whole Breach.

Now reflect upon your selves, you that have indulged any Sin, hath it not by degrees

grees eaten out the Spiritualness of your Hearts, and weaken'd the Life and Vigour of your Communion? hath it not made you dead, and cold, and indifferent unto the things and ways of God? have you not beheld God as it were at a great distance, and cared not for a nearer converse with you? Is it not high time, think you, that this Lust, which hath thus divided betwixt God and your Souls, should now at length be mortified, and this Make-bate being once removed, you again should renew the nearness of your Acquaintance with him; otherwise let me tell you, 'tis sadly to be feared lest this estrangement grow into a woful Apostacy, and that end in a fearful Perdition.

5.  
One unmortified Sin gives strength unto other Sins.

*Fifthly*, One unmortified Lust gives an additional Strength to others also, which of themselves were weak and impotent things, and could not otherwise have such power over the Soul. And this it doth as it is the ring-leading Lust that unites all others under a Discipline and Government: Scattered Enemies are not so powerful nor so formidable, as when they are combined together in a Body; then their Design is one, their Enterprize one, and they all Act as one Enemy. Now an unmortified Lust doth as it were rally all the rest under a Discipline; this heads them, this leads them on, and they all promote the Designs, and fight under the Conduct of this Lust; which union adds a mighty Strength and Power to them. It may be a Temptation which could not prevail for it self, and upon the account of its own interest that it hath in the Soul.

will

your  
igour  
e you  
the  
ot be  
, and  
you?  
t this  
t God  
th be  
nce re-  
ariness  
erwise  
ed left  
Apo-  
ion.  
an ad-  
rich of  
things,  
power  
s it is  
others  
Scat-  
nor so  
ned to  
is one,  
A& as  
st doth  
Disci-  
em on,  
d fight  
ch uni-  
wer to  
h could  
ccount  
e Soul.  
will

will yet certainly prevail, when it pleads its Subordination and Serviceableness to the unmortified Sin the Master-Lust. This is very remarkable; and therefore suppose (for instance) that Pride be the unmortified Sin, the great ring-leading Lust, and a Temptation to Covetousness assaults the Soul; possibly this being but an underling Sin, and not having made so great a party for it self as the other, might be easily rejected, did it plead only for it self; but when it pretends the interest of the Master-Lust, and pleads how serviceable great and rich Possessions would be to the Advancement of Pride and Ambition, this adds a double enforcement to the Temptation, and thereby bears down the Soul before it, as unable to make any available resistance. And thus proportionably it is in all other Sins whatsoever, they have a dependence one upon another; the great Sin that sways principally, and cannot subsist unless Provision be laid in, and a way made for it by inferiour Sins, which it countenances and bares out by its own Authority, and derives to them the same prevalency that it self hath gained over the Soul. Let not Men therefore think that their Captivity to Sin is more tolerable, because they find but one the most prevailing: Alas! this doth but serve to unite and drive the rest to a head, which perhaps otherwise would be vagrant and wandring, and uncertain in their Tempting; and by this one unmortified Lust the Devil hath gotten a fit handle to the Soul, whereby he may turn and wind it to what-



whatever other Sin he pleaseth. <sup>13</sup> 'Twas therefore a wise Command of the King of Syria to his Captain, *1 Kings 22. 31.* to *fight neither with small nor great save only with the King of Israel.* He well knew if the Chief Commander were once slain, the ungoverned Army might easily be routed and put to flight. We must in the mortifying of the Deeds of the Body, take the same counsel, and follow the same course; fight if not only, yet chiefly against the Commanding Lust, if that be once mortified, the rest are as an Army without an Head, who quickly will find themselves without Hands too: Otherwise while any one Lust remains unmortified, the Soul is almost in as dangerous a condition, as if every Lust were violent and raging.

6. *Unmortified Sin hinders Peace and Comfort.* Sixthly and Lastly, An unmortified Sin will most certainly bereave the Soul of Peace and Comfort, and hinder it from ever enjoying that Heaven upon Earth of Assurance. If you send to enquire of your Souls, (as *Foram* did of *Jehu*) Soul, *Is it Peace?* Is not this sad Answer returned, *what hast thou to do with Peace?* Or, what Peace, so long as thy Pride, thy Covetousness, thy Intemperance, while such and such a Lust remains unmortified? Now an unmortified Lust hinders Peace and Comfort these two ways.

I. First, As it blots our evidences for Heaven. Let any Man in the World tell me that his title to Heaven is clear, and past all uncomfortable doubtings, whose Conscience doth not witness his sincerity

to him, that he doth maintain an universal Opposition against all Sin, and exercise a constant Mortification of it; and I shall presently conclude that Man's Assurance to be the false and glowing Presumptions of a Spirit of Errour and Delusion. We know no better Test of a Man's Condition than what my Text affords, *If ye mortifie, ye shall live.* Now when any Lust is allowed and indulged, will not this blast a Man's Comfort, and raise in him Fears and Jealousies concerning his eternal Welfare? Such a Corruption I do not strive nor struggle against, I do not labour to beat down and keep under; and how then shall I assure my self that I am free from the Reigning Power of it, or shall be free from its Condemning Power? Let me tell you, though Freedom from the dominion of Sin may possibly consist with a much neglected Mortification, yet a comfortable evidence of that Freedom cannot; and therefore no wonder if through the carelessness of Christians in this great work so few attain solid and constant Comfort, the most being sadly perplexed with Doubts and Jealousies of their Hypocrisie and Unsoundness even all their days. This all riseth from some unmortified Lust or other, which either leaves a deep blur upon their evidences for Heaven, or else raiseth a thick mist before their Eyes that they cannot read them.

Secondly, An unmortified Lust hinders Peace by fomenting a perpetual Civil War in the Soul. Sometimes so it fares, where there is no higher a Principle than merely natural

2.  
*Unmortified Sin foment a Civil War in the Soul,*

natural Conscience; this strives and combates (as it is able) against the Sin before it is committed; this cries out and rageth against the Sinner after it is committed. But it is always so where there is a Principle of true Grace implanted to excite and assist Conscience. Let Corruption be never so great, its faction never so potent, yet Grace though but mean and weak will still fight it; it will neither give nor take Truce, till at length the great unmortified Lust be subdued and fall conquer'd and slain under it. What Tumults, what Uproars, what bandying of Affections against Affections, Will against Will, Thoughts against Thoughts, do wofully disquiet that Soul where Corruption will not submit, and Grace cannot! There is no deliberate Act either of Grace or Corruption exerted, but what must first break through a whole Army of its Enemies, set to oppose it. *Gal. 5. 17. The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would; That is, neither can ye act according to the bent of your Corrupt Will, nor yet of your Sanctified Will, without Opposition and Resistance from one of these two quarrelling Principles within, the Flesh and the Spirit. Such Men are like those Builders in Nehemiah, that wrought with one Hand, and with the other held their Weapons: So truly a Child of God in whom Corruption is yet too prevalent, if he work the works of God with one Hand, he must hold the Weapons of his Spiritual Warfare*



fare in the other. This is that unpeaceable and turbulent Condition, into which an unmortified Lust will certainly bring you. And though indeed in the most mortified Christian on Earth, there will sometimes be Combatings between these two contrary Parties; yet it is not with so much distraction, anguish and terrors, as where Corruption is more violent and outrageous. That's the last thing.

I might add, that an utter neglect of Mortification, binds you over to eternal Condemnation; *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die*: your Election it self cannot save you; your Vocation, Regeneration, and whatever else you might build the certainty of your Salvation upon, are all in vain if you do not mortifie. There is no other way by which you can possibly get to Heaven, but by marching over the Necks and Bellies of all your Lusts. But I shall insist no longer on this Head.

And now if to profess God with our Mouths and to deny him with our Hearts and Lives, if to talk of Religion and live without it, if to have a Form of Godliness and to deny the Power of it, be indeed this necessary Mortification, I need press this Duty no farther, we have such mortified ones more than enough; but if Wantonness, Censoriousness, Contempt of the means of Grace, Giddiness of Opinions, Libertinism, and strange large Allowances that Men take to themselves in their Conversations, be signs of an unmortified Heart; never certainly was there any professing

Age

Age in the World that had more need to have this Doctrine often press'd upon them, than that in which we live. I am not now urging you to that churlish and rigorous way of Mortification consisting only in a froward Abstinence from the Comforts and Conveniences of this Life, which some perhaps blind Devotionists have too rigidly exercised themselves with: I know the Maceration of the outward Man is not the Mortification of the old Man; and yet were there among Professours a greater moderation even in the use of the lawful Comforts of this Life, there would not possibly be so great an advantage given to deceivers as now there is, who under the specious shew of Self-denial in these things, draw away numbers of Profelytes after them, as being the only mortified Men. It is the inward Mortification that we labour to press upon you, which were it once industriously exercised, outward Exorbitancies would of themselves fall into a Decency and Sobriety.

But alas! when Men shall talk at such a rate of Spiritualness, as if some Angels sat upon their Tongues, and yet live at such an excess of Vanity, it may be of Prophaneness, as if Legions possessed their Hearts; what shall we judge of such Men? If we judge the Tree by the Leaves, what other can we think of them, but that they are Trees of Righteousness, and Plants of Renown? But if we look to their Fruits, Unprofitableness in their Relations, Envy, Snaife, Variance, Emulation, Wrath, Excessive

cessive Pride, Worldliness, Selfishness, what can we think of them, but that Heaven and Hell are now as near together, as these Mens Hearts and Mouths? And truly to let go these gross Professours, have we not cause to take up sad complaints even of true Christians themselves, in whom the reigning power of Sin is in their Regeneration mortified? may we not take up the same Speech concerning them, as St. Paul doth concerning the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. *Ye are yet carnal, and walk as Men?* If the Apostle could have laid in charge against these *Corinthians*, not only Envy, Strife and Divisions; but Hatred, Bitterness, implacableness of Spirit, brain-sick Opinions, and self-seeking Practices, joined with a great measure of Neglect and Contempt of the Glory of God; as justly as we can against the Christians of our times; certainly his reproof would not have been so mild, as to tell them that they walked as Men, but rather that they walkt as Devils---Would to God their miscarriages were not so generally known, as that every one could not supply the sense.

I have already set before you the great Evils that follow upon a neglected Mortification: As to your own particulars, if that cannot affect you, there is but little ground to hope that your Charity to others should prevail; yet give me leave to mention two grand Evils that hereby befall others.

*First*, Hereby they are induced to think all Professours are but Hypocrites, Religion a meer Mockery, and so come to have  
i.  
Neglect of  
Mortification  
hardens  
others in  
their Sin.



their Hearts imbittered against the ways of God, as being all but meer Deceit and Cou-  
senage. 'Tis a sad accusation, *Rom. 2. 24.*  
*The Name of God is blasphemed among the*  
*Gentiles through you.* How so? Because as  
in the former verses, they rested in the Law,  
and had a Form of Godliness, and were con-  
fident that they were Guides to the Blind,  
and Lights to them which were in Dark-  
ness; eminent Professours they were, like  
the Men of our days: Well, but mark,  
*Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not*  
*thy self? thou that makest thy boast of the*  
*Law, through breaking the Law dishonourest*  
*thou God?* Thou that professest Mortifica-  
tion, dost thou indulge thy self in thy Lusts?  
Thou who pretendest to near Fellowship  
and Communion with God, dost thou live  
as one without God in the World? Trem-  
ble at it, the Name of the Great God is blas-  
phemed among wicked Wretches through  
you; those who were Prophane you make  
Atheistical, scoffing and deriding Godliness,  
as an idle Whimsie; and because they see  
so little in their Lives, they presently con-  
clude there is no other difference between  
Saints and Sinners at all, but that the one  
have their Tongues a little better tipt, and  
their Fancies a little higher wound than the  
other. What's the common Raillery of  
these prophane Persons? Oh! this, forsooth,  
is a Saint, and yet how covetous, how gri-  
ping and greedy? Well, of all Men, deli-  
ver me from falling into the hands of a  
Saint. Well, beware lest these their Blas-  
phemies be not at last charged upon you,  
who

who through a loose, wanton, and unmortified Conversation have made Religion even to stink in their Nostrils. 'Tis only Mortification that can convince the World that Religion is any thing real: but while Men profess largely and live at large too, this keeps Men off from Religion; not because they think it a thing above them, but because they scorn it as a baseness below them, so to juggle and dissemble with the World.

*Secondly*, Hereby also wicked Men flatter themselves in their sinful estate, supporting themselves upon the Lives of unmortified Professours, that certainly they are in as good a condition as they. They are proud, and impatient, and earthly; and if these Men get to Heaven, why may not I? 'Tis true, they talk of Self-denial and Mortification, but look into our Lives, and mine is as harmless and innocent as theirs; they discourse of Experiences, and Communion and Acquaintance with God, and a Road of Words that I skill not; but certainly, if God will not condemn them, although they do nothing but talk, he will not condemn me for not talking as they do. And thus the Hands of wicked Men are mightily strengthened, and hereby they fortifie themselves in their Unregeneracy.

Now, Christians, if you would adorn the Gospel, and bring a Credit upon Religion, live so that your Conversations may be a Conviction to all the World, that God is in you of a truth, which will be when Mortification is more endeavoured and

practised. You have a Principle within you, which would you exert to the utmost, mere Moralists with all their Civility, and Legalists with all the forc'd Harshness which they use to curb and restrain Sin in themselves, must confess that they fall short of true Mortification.

Now though there be in the whole Course of Christianity, no other duty that can plead more for it self than this of Mortification, yet there is none that hath more cause to complain of a general neglect from the most of Professours than this hath. A slight superficial Christianity is that which now serves the turn, and if Men can but keep themselves from the gross and scandalous Pollutions of the World, and together with that maintain a shining blaze of Profession, whatever other Mortification is prest upon them, they reject as a needless Rigour and Severity. To enquire into the Causes why it should be so, would be to uncase a considerable part of the deceitfulness of Sin, and the stratagems of Satan. I shall therefore content my self with the discovery of some few Grounds that are more obvious and apparent. As,

1. *The difficulty of Mortification deters many from the practice of it.* First, The Harshness and Difficulty of a thorough Mortification, deters many from going to the bottom of it. If Lust will take pet and die of spight and fullness for a few sharp Words spoken against it, or for a few hard Thoughts conceived of it; then indeed the Professours of our Age are generally very mortified Christians. But when we tell them Corruption is both tenacious



nacious and powerful, and must be dealt roughly with as with a stubborn Enemy, that it will cost much Sweat and Blood, many sad Thoughts, many bitter Conflicts and Agonies of Soul to subdue it; this frights them from so hot a Service, 'tis a hard saying, and they cannot bear it. What saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 9. 26, 27. *So fight I, not as one that beateth the Air, but I beat down my Body* (for so the Word signifies) *and bring it into Subjection.* But is there any such hardship in this? would any Man be frightened with the difficulty of such a Combat, wherein he may beat down his Enemy, and yet suffer nothing from him? were it no more but to beat it down, trample upon it, and triumph over it, who would ever detract this Spiritual Warfare? See 2 Cor. 12. 7. *There was sent me a Messenger of Satan to buffet me.* Paul beats down his Body, and the Messenger of Satan buffets him, he and his Corruption are already at blows, and the contest grows sharp between them. Heb. 12. 4. The Apostle speaks of *resisting unto Blood in striving against Sin.* Striving against Sin and mortifying of it, is not so trivial and easie a work as the generality of Professours make it; it will draw Tears from the Eyes, and Groans from the Heart, and Blood from the Conscience. Whosoever gets to Heaven wades through a Red-Sea as well of his own as the Blood of his Lusts. Our Saviour compares it (and indeed the comparison is drawn home) to plucking out the right Eye, and cutting off the right hand,

*Matt. 5. 29, 30.* Now there are two things that make this exceeding difficult.

- I. *First*, The Pain, the Anguish and Unnaturalness of it. And both these are suted to a double Distemper too prevalent in the best Christians, whereby the work of Mortification is rendred very hard and difficult; and they are,

1. *First*, A Sinful Niceness, Tenderness and Delicacy, utterly misbecoming Spiritual Soldiers; whereby they are so softened and effeminated, that they cannot endure Pain nor Hardship.

2. *Secondly*, A Sinful Fondness and Compassion; which being still in Part, Carnal, they do bear unto their Carnal Part; and this makes Mortification seem very unnatural.

- I. *First*, Christians through a Spiritual Sloth that hath seized upon them, are grown Nice and Delicate; and this makes the work of Mortification seem very Painful. A little Pain is more intolerable to Men accustomed to a tender Education, than Torments are to others. Truly Christians by too much indulging their Corruptions, do bring them up tenderly, seldom crossing or molesting them, that when they come in earnest to set upon the work of Mortification, the extreme Anguish and Torment of it is such, that they cannot bear it; and so either they shrink from it, or else perform it very slightly. I may well say through the Niceness of Christians, Mortification is now a days grown so easy and gentle, that Corruption it self scarce feels it: Some excrescencies

*Spiritual  
Slothful-  
ness makes  
Christians  
neglect  
Mortifica-  
tion.*

and

and superfluities of Naughtiness they may possibly Prune off, but when is it that they lay the Axe to the Root? What is it for a Man to pare the Nails, or cut the Hair? This goes not to the Quick. Truly that which Christians now call their Mortification, is but very little more; they do but pare away the superfluous and less sensible Parts of Corruptions, that of a wild, overgrown thing, which else it would be, they might hereby reduce it to a Decorum and Decency. And shall I call this mortifying, or rather, is it not an adorning of Lust? Shew me almost the Christian that stabs Sin to the Heart, that draws blood at every Encounter, that cuts off Limb after Limb, and Member after Member, contemning that Smart and Anguish, that frights tender and delicate Christians from so rough an Engagement.

Secondly, There is in the best, too much of a Sinful Fondness and Compassion that makes Mortification seem to be cruel and unnatural; and how can it otherwise be, while in the very best there are still remainders of that other Self, I mean Corruption! Every Christian hath a double Self, his Carnal and his Spiritual Self; and Mortification is as it were Self-Murder, he doth what in him lies to Murder himself, that is, his Carnal Self. Now look how difficult it is for a Man to offer Violence to himself; for the Right Eye to be torn out by the Right Hand, and that again to be cut off by the other; so difficult it is (abating only that it is another Self that doth

2.  
A Sinful  
fondness un-  
to Lust  
makes Mor-  
tification  
seem cruel.



it) for a Christian to exercise Mortification; because it is a kind of Self-Destruction. Lust is so close and intimate with the Soul, so inlaid with the Principles, and wrought into the very Bowels of it; that what the Apostle saith, *Eph. 5. 29. No Man yet ever hated his own Flesh*; I may apply to this case: No Man yet ever hated his fleshly Part; that is, with such an utter Antipathy and Detestation as he ought. With what Compassion, or rather, with what extremity and rage of Passion, would a Mother see an Infant of her own Conception delivered up to the Slaughter! Truly there is in all Men somewhat of the like natural Affection towards the Conceptions of their own Lust; so that it is with a great deal of Reluctancy and Violence offer'd to nature, that they expose their Infant Lusts as soon as born to the sword and slaughter of Mortification. Now until this Fondness be removed, and Christians more hardened against their Corruptions, that their Hearts shall not pity them, nor their Eyes spare them, though they are their own Offspring, though they are so much themselves, yet they can with their own Hands thrust the sword of Mortification through them, and with delight look upon their gaspings and blood; this great work can never go forward proportionable to the great and absolute necessity of it. That's the first particular.

2.

*The perpetuity of Mortification frights many from it.*

*Secondly*, As the difficulty, so the constancy, the perpetuity of this work frights many from engaging in it. If Sin would

be

be laid dead by a blow, most Men would for once strike home; but when they think that Mortification is a perpetual quarrel, which they must all their Life time prosecute, without a day's or minute's respite, that still they must be in Arms, still upon the Watch, and still Fighting, without the Truce of a breathing allowed them; this makes some give it over quite as an endless thing, and others to follow it but very remissly. And truly unless this work of Mortification be pursued with an indefatigable constancy without intermission, these two evils will necessarily follow.

*First*, In the interval, Lust after it hath been defeated, will again recruit and gather Head, and possibly assault the Soul with a redoubled force.

1.

And *Secondly*, Grace will for want of Exercise grow unwieldy, unactive, and less fit for service than it was. If at any time there be a neglect of Mortification, all that was formerly done against Corruption is meerly in vain, and but so much labour lost; Lust will rally after a Rout, and therefore Grace when it hath defeated it, must pursue it close, still gaining upon it, and disputing its ground by inches, till it hath at last quite forced it out of the Soul.

2.

Men that are to empty a Pond, in which there are many Springs rising, must be still casting out the Water as it is still bubbling up; if they stop, the Pond grows presently full, and their labour is again to begin.

Truly our Hearts are like this Pond, in which there are many Springs still spouting

ing

ing out Corrupt Streams: Mortification is the Laving of this Pond; if Christians do but for a while cease and give it over, the Heart grows full again of all manner of Wickedness, and the work is set as far back as it was at the beginning. Now these incessant pains few will bear, and therefore it is that this work of Mortification is generally so much neglected, in the World.

3. *Thirdly*, The many Discouragements which even Christians themselves meet with in the work of Mortification, do make them backward to it, and negligent in it. Many Discouragements I might here mention both from without and from within; as the evil Examples of unmortified Professours, the Auxiliaries that Lust receives from the Policy and Power of Satan, the manifold Enforcements which when a Temptation is in its hour, it hath from Objects, Occasions, and such like outward Advantages; the inward secret Conspiracies of the Heart it self with Lust: all which and many more, are great Discouragements unto Christians, making not only the Hands of their Enemies strong against them, but many times their own Hands weak, and their Hearts faint; so that they are ready to say they shall one day fall by the Hands of these mighty Lusts; and that therefore it is as good to give themselves up for lost Men, and never more to struggle against what they cannot possibly subdue: And truly, did not the Spirit of God in the midst of these sad Thoughts, break in with extraordinary Sup-  
ports



ports and Assistances, all their Hopes and Confidences would here give up the Ghost; and they abandon themselves over to the Power of their Lusts to be captivated by them at their Pleasure. But omitting these, I shall only speak to two great Discouragements drawn from the bad event of an endeavoured Mortification. *Two great discouragements in the work of Mortification.*

*First*, The little visible Success they gain after all their Pains and Labour. 1.

*Secondly*, The many sad Defeats and Foils, which notwithstanding all they receive from their Lusts. 2.

*First*, The little visible and apparent Success of the Exercise of Mortification, doth mightily dishearten even true Christians from it. And this Discouragement is by so much the greater, if before their Conversion Conscience was tender, and Lust never outrageous, nor broke out into any scandalous foul Sin. Such Christians can hardly perceive the difference between themselves now, and themselves long ago; after all the labour and toil they have taken in Mortification, they are they think, but almost where they were; little progress have they made, little ground have they got, they are not conscious to themselves of any wilful neglect; they have constantly stood upon their guard, kept their watch, carefully used the means for Mortification; and yet after all, Lust they think is still as prevalent with them as before; and this discourageth them from taking so great pains (as they think) to so little purpose. Now there are two grounds why the Success

cess of Mortification is not always visible and apparent.

1. *First*, Because of the Rooted Permanency of every Lust in the Soul. Mortification doth not utterly kill, but only wound and weaken Sin. And therefore though you single out any one particular Lust, and set the whole strength of Grace against it, though you do as *Samuel* did with *Agag*, hew it in peices before the Lord, that you would think it should never be able to stir more, yet it is in this like to Worms and Serpents, every peice will move; the very next Temptation, Object or Opportunity, will draw forth the same Corruption again, which you thought you had utterly kill'd. Mortification doth not put Sin to death, so as that it shall never move more in the Soul: And therefore Christians aiming at this Death and Extirpation of Sin, think that all their labour is but lost, when they find every one of those Corruptions to stir and move as they did formerly. And this discourageth them.

2. *Secondly*, Another thing that hinders the visible success of Mortification, is the great variety and multiplicity of Corruption, whereby it comes to pass that one follows upon the Neck of another, and as soon as one is beaten down, another riseth up; that though a Christian exercise a daily Mortification, yet he can scarcely tell whether the number of his Enemies be diminished or augmented; every day he fights, and every day he conquers, and yet every day he hath as many to fight against, and to conquer

conquer as before. Now what a Discouragement this is, any who is loth to put himself to a great deal of trouble to no purpose, may easily imagine. Oh! faith such an one, could I perceive that I gain'd advantage against my Corruptions, that I subdued and put to death any of them, I should count all my pains well bestowed: But alas! there's such a Lust, that I have been struggling against so long, and yet am not free from it; nay, there are so many thousand Lusts that are still rising in me, and when I turn my self against one, another surpriseth me: if I oppose that, another gets within me; all my victories are in vain, my work is endless, and still I have as many Enemies to combat with as at the first. And hereupon he is strongly tempted to give over Mortification, as a fruitless work. That's the first Discouragement, the little visible success by reason of the permanency and multitude of Corruptions.

*Secondly*, Another great Discouragement in the work of Mortification, is the many sad Defeats and Foils, which notwithstanding all their Endeavours, even the best Christians have often received from their Lusts. Though the Conquest at the last be assured, yet it is not without many doubtful Trials and various Successes. *Paul* the greatest Champion that ever fought the Lord's Spiritual Battels, and maintain'd the Cause of Grace; yet complains of his Captivity to the Law of the Members, *Rom. 7. 23.* *David* no less a Warriour against

2.



gainst uncircumcised Lusts, than against uncircumcised *Philistins*, yet he cries out of his wounds, *Psal. 38. 5. My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness.* It would be a very sad and discouraging Spectacle if we could see all the spoils which Satan and Corruption have by force taken from the most Eminent Christians. Such a Man's Shield of Faith lost in such an Encounter, such a Man's Sword of the Spirit wrested from him in another, another looseth the Breast-plate of Righteousness, another the Helmet of Hope. Yea, there is no Christian but is in some Encounter or other despoil'd of part of his Armour, and himself taken Prisoner. Now hereby they are disheartned from again attempting that Enemy whom they have found too hard for them. When they find Lust to be an over-match for them, they flee and give place, and conclude it utterly in vain for them with their ten thousand, to make War with him that comes against them with twenty thousand, and so they sit down under the neglect of Mortification.

These now are some of the Grounds why this great Duty is so little practised among Christians; and what is at the bottom of all this but only a great deal of Spiritual Sloth and Laziness, that makes them loth to put themselves upon difficulties and hazards; yea and possibly makes them fancy more difficulties and hazards in Mortification than indeed there are. *Prov. 26. 13. The slothful Man saith, there is a Lion in the way, a Lion in the Streets: 'tis a very*  
unlike

unlikely thing that a Lion should be in the Street; yet this his Sloth suggests to him as an excuse to keep him from the labour of going abroad. Well, what doth this Sluggard do! in the next Verse the Wife-Man tells, *As the Door turneth upon its Hinges; so doth a Slothful Man upon his Bed.* The Door turns often but gains no ground, still it is where it was. So truly it is with a Slothful Christian, that neglects Mortification for fear of difficulties; let him turn himself to whatsoever he will, yet still he is but upon his Hinges, he gains no ground upon his Lusts, nor makes no progress towards Heaven. Alas! Heaven and Happiness are not to be obtained with ease, by sitting still and wishing against Lust; but by a laborious contending and struggling against it. What saith our Saviour, *Matt. 11. 12. The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.* There must be an holy Roughness and Violence used, to break through all that stands in our way, neither caring for their Allurements, nor fearing their Opposition; but with a pious Obstinacy, and (if I may so call it) Frowardness, we must thrust away the one, and bear down the other. This is the Christian who will carry Heaven by force, when the whining pusillanimous Professour who only complains of difficulty, but never attempts to conquer it, will be for ever shut out.

The next thing to be enquired into is, what is this necessary and yet much neglected duty of Mortification, and wherein it

it doth consist. An exact Method would perhaps have called for this at first, since it were in vain to press the necessity; and not to open the duty: But I know there are few here, who when mention is made of Mortification, do not in the general notion, apprehend it to be some earnest and constant striving against Sin, so as to weaken and conquer it. Which supposition is a sufficient ground for adjourning the more minute explication of this Duty until now. And herein I shall proceed, (1.) Negatively, to shew you what it is not, which is made apparent by the many counterfeit Mortifications that are in the World, either disciplinary Severity, and a pontifical Rigour in tormenting, rather than subjecting the outward Man; or else at best civil Morality, are rested in as true Mortification. It will be therefore of considerable advantage, to uncase to you those appearances of Mortification, which yet indeed are not it. And (2.) Positively, I shall endeavour to open what is necessarily required unto true Mortification, and wherein that great Work and Duty doth consist.

I. *First*, Negatively, what it is not. And here I need not tell you.

I. *First*, That Mortification is not the utter and total Extirpation and Destruction of Sins In-being in the Soul. There are a sort of Phanaticks, or Phranticks rather, risen up among us, who by pretending to that in this Life unattainable Privilege of a perfect immunity from all Sin; do make Mortification inconsistent with Mortality; and while

*Mortification is not an utter Extirpation of Sin in the Soul.*



while they promise to themselves that Liberty which God never promis'd them, they are become the Servants of Corruption. St. *John* frequently gives these Men the plain lie. 1 *John* 1. 8. *If we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us; ver. 10. If we say we have not sinned, we make God a Liar, and his word is not in us.* This is that which the manifold Falls, the grievous Outcries, the bitter Repentings, the broken Bones, and the bloodied Consciences, even of the best and perfectest Saints on Earth, have too sadly Attested beyond all Contradiction; unless it be from those Men to whom customari-ness hath made the difference between Sinning and forbearing to Sin unperceivable. It is indeed the sincere Desire and Endeavour of every Child of God, so thoroughly to mortifie Corruption, that it should never more stir, nor tempt, never more move nor break forth unto Eternity. Oh! it was a blessed word of Promise, if God should say to us concerning our Lusts, as *Moses* did to the *Israelites*, *those Egyptians whom you have seen this day persuing your Souls, ye shall see them again no more for ever.* No, God is (if I may so say) more Provident than to spoil Heaven, by fore-stalling that Happiness which makes it so infinitely desirable. And therefore he here suffers these *Cananites* to be Thorns in our Eyes, and Scourges in our Sides, to sweeten the place of our Rest; and when we are most victorious over them, all that we can do is but to make them subject and

D

tribu-

tributary. They have so possess the fastnesses of our Souls, that there is but one Mortification can drive them out, and that is our Dissolution. Under the Ceremonial Law, if an earthen Vessel were Polluted by any unclean thing, the only way of Purification prescribed, was to break it. Truly, we are such earthen Vessels, though Mortification may scour and cleanse us from much of that Filth which cleaveth to us; yet we can never be fully Purified till Death breaks us to peices. It was only Sin that brought Death into the World; and it is only Death that can carry Sin out of the World. So that every true Christian is another *Sampson*, he slays more of the uncircumcised at his Death, than he did in all his Life time before. 'Tis true God is many times pleased to vouchsafe eminent and signal Successes, in a way of Mortification; but yet these are but as it were pickeering small Conquests, obtain'd by singling out some particular Lusts; but it is only Death that makes the general Defeat and Slaughter. And therefore as the weakest Grace is sufficient to destroy the Reign of Sin; so the strongest Grace exercised in the most constant and severe course of Mortification, is insufficient to destroy its residence. That's the first thing.

2. *Secondly*, A Harsh Severity and Rigour used only towards the outward Man is not true Mortification. This is that which blind Devotionists rest upon, who by sharp Penances, long Fastings, and other ways of ignorant Will-Worship, do go the way rather

*Severity used only to the outward Man is not true Mortification,*

the  
rup  
M  
as  
Cl  
Sho  
ver  
in a  
of  
clea  
him  
as f  
is f  
can  
Sou  
spis  
Mer  
I ne  
ticu  
the  
days  
Yea  
that  
the  
any  
part  
certa  
shou  
be m  
now  
their  
ever  
be v  
be f  
wher  
in th

ther to destroy themselves than their Corruptions. This churlish and rugged way of Mortification, is altogether as incongruous, as if a Man should lay a Plaister upon his Cloths to cure a Wound in his Body. Should he tell down Rivers of Tears for every vain Thought, should he fine himself in a thousand Prayers for the commission of every Sin, should he Fast till his Skin cleaveth to his Bones, and his Bones stared him in the Face; yet all this would be as far from the Mortification of Sin, as it is from a Satisfaction for Sin: All these cannot reach that bottom and centre of the Soul, in which Lust sits Enthron'd, and despiseth all the Attempts and Batteries that Men make against the outworks only. But I need not insist much longer on this particular; the greater Light, yea I may say the greater Atheism and Prophaness of our days will discharge me from that trouble. Yea, Professours themselves by neglecting that moderation they should use towards the outward Man in Diet, in Attire or in any other Enjoyment; do omit if not a part of, if not a means to Mortification, yet certainly that Sign and Character which should evidence them to all the World, to be mortified Persons. The truth is, Men now live as if it nothing at all concern'd their Souls what their Bodies do: whatsoever these Men pretend, yet it must needs be very difficult to believe that there can be Humility and Mortification in the one, where there is not Sobriety and Decency in the other. I will not undertake to pre-



Mortification  
on must  
reach the  
outward  
Man in two  
cases.

1.

scribe how far a true Mortification must in particular reach the outward Man; yet in the general take these two Rules.

*First*, All that Indulgence which indisposeth to Holy and Spiritual Duties, or hinders us from them, or in them, must by the exercise of Mortification be taken off and removed. There must be Rigour and Severity used, even towards the Body, if formerly we found the want thereof made us unfit for, or remiss in, the duties of Religion. It is fittest for your own Christian Prudence to descend unto particulars, and examine what it is that indisposeth you, either in Hearing, or Praying, or any other means of Communion with God, whatever it be; whether it proceeds from infirmity, or custom and habitude; if it be an occasion to hinder the life and spiritualness of our duties, Mortification must be here set on work, though not without violence and regret unto the outward Man. What saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 9. 27. *I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection.* That is, he made it useful and serviceable to his Soul. Where Mortification is neglected, even the Body, that underlying and servile part of Man, grows wild and unruly, rebelling against the Soul, and hurrying it whither it self will.

2.

*Secondly*, All that Provision which Indulgence towards the outward Man lays in for the Flesh, to fulfil it in the Lusts thereof; must be cut off by the careful exercise of Mortification. Do you find that the pampering of the outward Man, is the strength-

streng  
Ease.  
are b  
or O  
time  
ven  
when  
nour  
own  
acco  
the  
T  
fed  
four  
foev  
then  
Wil  
for  
thin  
T  
rup  
fati  
Ma  
hun  
are  
Dea  
fied  
fem  
kle  
rab  
am  
the  
Aff  
be  
Lib  
and

strengthening of the old Man? that outward Ease, Plenty, or any other Conveniences, are but Instruments for Lust to work with, or Objects for it to work upon? It is high time for Mortification to be exercised, even about those things which are lawful; when once Lust turns them into food and nourishment for it self. I leave it to your own experiences to frame instances, and accordingly to proceed in Mortification for the future.

These two general Rules being supposed (which it were to be wished Professors were more careful in observing) whatsoever other severity Men execute upon themselves, may be called Cruelty and Will-Worship; but cannot be reckoned for true Mortification. That's the second thing.

Thirdly, The not breaking forth of Corruption into a scandalous Life and Conversation, is no evidence of true Mortification. Many Mens Lusts are like secret Imposthumes that breed within in the Breast, that are never known till they prove their Deaths. It is not necessary that unmortified Sin should be like a running Sore, offensive and noisom to others; it may rankle and fester within, till it become incurable and mortal. Lust hath a large and ample Dominion inwards in the Heart; there are Thoughts, Contrivances, Desires, Affections, and Motions; all which may be altogether unmortified: when yet the Life and Conversation may be so innocent and blameless, as not to be justly charged.

2.  
The not  
breaking  
forth of Sin  
in a scandalous  
Life is  
not true  
Mortification.

ble with the guilt of any one notorious Sin. What can we judge of such an one, but that he is a very mortified Christian; yea, but God who knoweth the Heart, yea and possibly his Conscience, sees abundance of Pride, Uncleanneſs, Worldlineſs, Unbelief, Contempt of God and his Ways, reigning and raging within, in all that Strength and Power which they have gotten to themſelves by ſo long a continuance, without the leaſt check from Mortification.

*The reaſons  
why unmortified Sin  
breaks not  
out into act.*

I.

Now it may be attributed to a threefold cauſe, why a Luſt that is unmortified doth not always break forth into groſs and ſcandalous Sins.

*First*, To that quiet reſerved Temper and Diſpoſition that ſome Men are of. Their very Nature is ſuch, that they will do nothing violently and outragiously, and therefore they will not ſin ſo. Some Men are rude Sinners, and boiſterouſly Wicked; others are of a more calm and retired Spirit; and yet poſſibly as far from being mortified as the other. Take a true Chriſtian who hath often ſweat and toiled in the mortifying of ſome particular prevailing Luſt and Corruption to which his Temper enclin'd him; as ſuppoſe Paſſionateness, or the like; and compare him to one of a ſmooth, ſedate, and even Temper, though altogether unacquainted with the great work of Mortification; and how unlovely ſhall the Paſſion of the mortified Chriſtian appear, in compariſon with the Sedateness of the unmortified Sinner: ſuch is the great advantage which a Man's natural inclinati-

on



on gives either to the acting or suppressing of Sin. And therefore take this Rule by the way, in examining thy Mortification; never reflect upon that seeming prevalency thou hast over those Lusts which are not strengthened and advantaged by the bent and tendency of thy natural Inclination; for this will prove a very deceitful mark; rather look what Success thou gainest over the Sin of thy Nature, be it what it will; or against those Sins which no natural Temper can ever counterfeit the Mortification of, such as are Unbelief, Hardness of Heart, Impenitency, and such like Spiritual Sins; which are common to all Men of what Temper and Disposition soever. Otherwise, to conclude that Corruption is mortified and subdued, because thou breakest not forth into such Sins to which perhaps thy natural Inclination is not so strongly bent, is but a false and deceitful Evidence.

*Secondly,* The not breaking out of unmortified Corruption, may often be imputed to the absence of Temptations, Opportunities, and Occasions of Sinning, and such like outward advantages; which were they present, would certainly draw it forth into act. Either the Devil is wanting to Mens Corruptions, in fitting them with suitable Temptations, or else God's Providence in fitting them with a convenient opportunity; one or both of which, is the true reason why we see no more Wickedness committed in the World (though it doth now too fearfully abound) and not the weakening or abating the Power and Rage of it

by Mortification. When the Prophet told *Hazael* what Cruelties he should act upon the *Jews*; *What* (saith he) *is thy Servant a Dog, that he should do this great thing?* While he was in his private Estate, he could not think his Nature had been so cruel; but when he was advanced to the Kingdom of *Syria*, and had subdued the *Israelites*; then the Temptations of a Conqueror assault him, and he shews that Cruelty which before lay lurking and dormant. And so it was with *Peter* in denying his Lord and Master. Now look inward a little, you pretend perhaps to be mortified Persons; and why, Oh! Not any one Sin besides common failings hath broken from me so long time. Hath there not? tell me, were there no Temptations to provoke and draw out thy Corruptions? were there no Opportunities wanting to let out thy Corruptions? If there were, this thy not Sinning proceeds not from a mortified Heart, but from a negligent Devil, or a gracious God. That Man gets a good opinion of himself at too easie a rate, who thinks himself mortified for not Sinning when he is not Tempted.

2. *Thirdly*, It may be imputed to a powerful Restraint laid upon the eruptions of Lust. This hinders them from breaking out into act; but yet this doth not mortifie nor weaken them. I do not now speak of that Almighty Restraint that God in his ordinary Providence lays upon the Lusts of Men; by which indeed he mortifies them, even as he mortified *Jeroboam's* Hand, which

which he stretched out against the Prophet, by taking the Power of Sinning from them; but of that Restraint which Men themselves lay upon their Lusts; who yet are altogether ignorant of and unexperienced in the Spiritualness of this duty of Mortification. Men may lay a check and curb upon their Lusts; that whereas formerly they let themselves loose unto all manner of Prophaness and Impiety; they may now relinquish that Excess of Riot, and bind their Corruptions within a narrower Pale and Compass; and thereby appear both to themselves and others to be much mortified and changed Christians.

Now this Restraint may proceed from a twofold cause.

*First*, From gross Hypocrisie and deep Dissimulation, for secular ends and advantages, with which the extravagancy of Wickedness possibly would not consist. And truly, we may justly fear, that much of that seeming Mortification which is among Professours, stands only upon this bottom. Certainly that sinful Liberty which they allow themselves, where it is not prejudicial to their worldly Interests, is a very sad ground to suspect all other Restraints that they impose upon themselves, to be from no higher a Principle, than compliance with the genius and current of the times. Such Mens cursed Hypocrisie shall in Hell bear the punishment of all those Sins that it self hindred from being committed; that's all the reward it shall have.

1.

*Secondly*, This Restraint may likewise proceed

2.



proceed from the Strength of Convictions, and the Terrours of a natural Conscience. Wicked Men many times dare not commit those Sins, which yet notwithstanding their Hearts and Affections are bent upon; should they, Conscience would hurl Fire-Brands in their Faces, and haunt them with fearful Threatnings and Outcries; and some there are who without question do stand in as much dread of an enraged Conscience, as they do of Hell it self. Now this keeps Men in some awe and order, that they dare not commit Sin with so much impudence and greediness, as otherwise they would do; but yet this amounts not to a true Mortification: this all proceeds from the Power of Conscience, forcibly reigning in Corrupt Nature, not from the Power of Grace, changing that Nature. As it is with wild Beasts kept up in a grate, they cannot ravin after their Prey; but still their Natures are ravenous: so it is with Conscience, it many times coops up Men that they cannot ravin after their Lusts, as were they free from such a Restraint they would; but still their Natures continue un sanctified, their Sins unmortified, their Affections, Desires, and Delights eager after them, though they dare not commit them; yea and possibly (which is the usual effect of a forcible Restraint) by so much the more violent, by how much the more debarred from them. This is the third thing.

4. *Fourthly*, The relinquishment and forsaking of a Sin, is not an evidence of a true Mortification. I do not here mean only

*Forsaking of Sin is not true Mortification.*

only such a temporary forsaking of Sin as theirs was in 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. who *having escaped the Pollution of the World through Lust, were again intangled*: Certain it is that these Mens Corruptions were but for a time dissembled, and never mortified; but take it for a perpetual relinquishment and an utter divorce, so that the Soul never again returns to the commission of it, or at least not with any proportionable Frequency and Delight; yet this forsaking of Sin, may be without the Mortification of it. Take this in two cases.

*First*, When Men do change and barter their Sins, then there is a forsaking of Sin, but no mortifying of it. Multitudes of Lusts lie crowded together in the Soul, and each of these must have its alternate Reign; and therefore when one hath for a while swayed, and been the Master-Lust, it gives place to another, and that to another, till the Sinner hath run through the bead-roll of them. And therefore the Apostle, *Tit.* 3. 3. speaks of *Serving divers Lusts and Pleasures*: divers in their turns and successions. Now this deceives many; they find an old tyrannical Lust that hath kept them under long and laborious Thralldom, begin to grow weak and feeble, and herupon they conclude it is mortified in them; but alas, they do not observe some other Lust reigning in its stead, it doth but give way to make room for another; so that though the stream of Corruption be diverted and turned out of one Channel, yet it runs with as full a tide in another.

I.

ther. Let not him who of a Sensual Person, is grown a Worldling; of a Prophane Person, an Hypocrite, think that he hath mortified any one of these Lusts. A changed Man indeed he is, changed from one extreme to another, from Sin to Sin; but this change is far from Mortification.

2. *Secondly*, When a Lust rather forsakes the Sinner, than he it; then there may be a perpetual Separation, where there is no Mortification. There are Sins that are proper and peculiar to such an Estate and Season of a Man's Life, upon the alteration of which they vanish and disappear. The Sins of Youth drop off from declining Age, as incongruous and misbecoming; the Man doth as it were outgrow them. Now if he reflect back to take a view of the numberless Vanities and Follies he hath left, how deadned his Heart and Affections are to those things which before he delighted in; this may possibly make him think himself a very mortified Man; when alas! he hath not so much forsaken his Sins as they him; as long as his natural Vigour could relish the Temptation, and as long as it comports with his State and Condition; so long he served it and lived in it. Let not such a Man deceive himself, though now he hath forsaken it, yet he never mortified it; the Sin deserted him, and fell off of its own accord; this Fruit of the Flesh was never beaten down by Mortification, but being full ripe, fell off of it self without violence. That's the fourth thing.

5. *Fifthly*, and Lastly, Every Victory and

Con-

Con-  
tifica  
regen  
Succ  
as to  
been  
forth  
their  
sensib  
them  
tifica

*Fin*  
chiev  
extra  
in th  
by fl  
sidera  
fles t  
Lusts

*Se*  
ries I  
es, y  
if on  
ther  
that  
Gove  
nour  
Lust  
foeve  
dy o

N  
true  
conce  
ved b  
false  
it wi



Conquest gained over Sin is not a true Mortification of it. I doubt not but many unregenerate Persons have yet had eminent Successes in opposing their Corruptions, so as to hinder them even when they have been raging and impetuous from breaking forth, either to the defiling or wounding of their Consciences; nay, sometimes so far as sensibly to abate the Power and Force of them; but all this amounts not to a true Mortification: and that upon a double account.

*Every victory over Sin is not true Mortification.*

*First,* Because all such Conquests are achieved by Principles altogether foreign and extraneous unto Grace; that hath no hand in the work, but natural Conscience acted by slavish Fear, or some other carnal Consideration manageth all the Fights and Scuffles that wicked Men maintain against their Lusts. And,

1.

*Secondly,* Because though by these Victories Lust seems to be weakened in its Branches, yet it is much strengthened in its Root; if one Sin be pulled down, it is that another may be advanced: All the Conquests that wicked Men obtain do not destroy the Government, but only change the Governors: Nay, indeed it is only one contrary Lust that fights against the other, and which soever of them is defeated, yet still the Body of Sin thrives. That's the last thing.

2.

Now seeing there are so many things like true Mortification in the World, it nearly concerns us to beware, lest we be deceived by them, and so flatter our selves with a false Evidence for Life; to prevent which, it will be necessary,

*Secondly,*

II. *Secondly*, To open to you this great duty of Mortification Positively, and in this possibly some useful Progress may be made when these two things have been searcht into. *First*, Wherein it doth consist. *Secondly*, What things are indispensibly required thereunto.

I. For the *First*, I take the Nature of Mortification to consist in these three things. *First*, In the Weakning Sin's Root and Principle.

*True Mortification consists in three things.*

*Secondly*, In Suppressing its Risings and Motions. And,

*Thirdly*, In Restraining its outward Actings and Eruptions.

It is the first of these that makes the other two any parts of this true Mortification: Let a Man oppose himself all his days against the workings of Corruption within, and the actings of it without; yet unless the radical Power and Force of Corruption be in some good measure abated; let him not think he hath mortified any one Lust. 'Tis a task utterly impossible to kill it, if it be not first wounded at the Heart. It were easy to demonstrate the vanity and unsuccessfulness of all Endeavours, to mortifie these Limbs and Out-parts of the old Man, unless his Vitals be first perished, and his inward Strength decayed. For,

I. *First*, Hereby you can never arrive at any comfortable Issue in the Work. 'Tis but like beating down Leaves from a Tree which will certainly sprout forth again, the Root is still remaining in the ground full of Sap and Juice, and will supply every Branch

Bra  
rifi  
fam  
End  
to c  
S  
cess  
delu  
still  
with  
boiss  
weal  
upon  
futu  
to th  
tions  
vain  
furio  
TI  
Issue  
ginni  
natur  
rager  
Corr  
eithe  
fed  
der h  
lost i  
acco  
hath  
cal a  
Body  
N  
tion  
TH  
incur

Branch of Corruption with the same Nourishment, and make it flourish into the same Strength and Verdure; which all your Endeavours will but fruitlessly attempt to despoil it of. And,

*Secondly*, Hereupon finding no better Success, but that after all, he sees himself deluded, and that Lust is not mortified; still as thick Fogs and Steams of it rise within him as ever, still it is as unruly and boisterous as ever, and more to suppress and weaken it in his way cannot be done; hereupon, I say, he despairingly gives over all future contendings, and abandons himself to the Power and Violence of his Corruptions; and those which before he strove in vain to stop, he now spurs on and drives furiously towards Perdition.

2.

This is the fearful and yet too frequent Issue of such Endeavours as have their beginnings meerly from the Convictions of natural Conscience; they receive no encouragement nor recruit from the decay of Corruption, and therefore usually expire either in a loose Formality, or in a professed Dissoluteness. Very sad it is to consider how much pains and industry have been lost in struggling against Sin, only upon this account, that to all their Endeavours there hath been no Foundation laid in the radical and inward weakning of the Habit and Body of Corruption.

Now this inward weakning of Corruption is twofold,

The *First* proceeds from that mortal and incurable Wound which the Body of Sin received

1.



received in the first implantation of Grace. Then was the Head of this Serpent crushed; and whereas before it had the Power and Authority of a King and Sovereign in the Soul, in that very moment it was deposed, and hath ever since harraressed it only as a Rebel and Traitor.

2. The *Second* proceeds from those redoubled strokes which mortified Christians follow their Corruptions with, whereby they every day and hour draw Blood and Spirits from them; and so by degrees waft and weaken them. The first indeed is not any part of that Mortification whereof I am now treating, but rather a necessary Antecedent to it; and the latter would not be Mortification did it not presuppose the former: for therefore doth a Man by opposing the Motions and Actings of Corruption in his daily Conversation, weaken the Habit of it, because of that first weakning which it received in Conversion. The Apostle speaking of this weakning of Sin, calls it a Crucifying of it with Christ, *Rom. 6. 6. Our old Man is Crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed*: Now look, how was Christ Crucified? first he was hung upon the Cross, and then pierced with a Spear. So truly it is in the Mortification of Corruption; our first Conversion unto God hangs it upon the Cross, whence it shall never come down alive; and then our constant Endeavours are as so many Spears continually piercing it, till the Body of this old Man becomes all over one great Wound, whence daily issue out the Blood

Blood and Spirit, the Strength and Vigour, and at length Life it self. This is it which makes the keeping under the motions of Corruption, and the keeping in its Eruptions to be true Mortification in the Children of God, when yet the very same Endeavours in unregenerate Men are nothing so. Sin in them is upon the Throne, and not upon the Cross, and therefore they cannot wound nor pierce it, they cannot weaken nor destroy it.

Yea, but may some say, must there in *Objections* true Mortification be not only a striving against the Motions and Actings of Corruption, but also the weakning of its Root and Principle? Alas! then I fear all my Endeavours have been fruitless and in vain. Some Success indeed I have gained against the Eruptions of Lust, but still I find the Temptations of it as strong and violent as ever: I perceive no weakenings, no decays in it, but it rather grows more rebellious and head-strong every day than other; and therefore all that I have done against them hath not been true Mortification.

This no question is the case of many a mortified Christian, and therefore for answer hereunto,

*First*, Consider, Possibly thou mayest be herein mistaken, that thou thinkest that *Answer* Corruption moves stronger than before, when only thou takest more notice of its Motions than thou didst before. When the Heart is made tender and soft by a long exercise of Mortification, a less Temptation then troubles it more than formerly a  
2
greater

greater would. Every the least rising of Corruption in the Heart seems now a desperate and hainous thing, whereas before, through the deadness and stupidity of Conscience, it was made light of and scarce regarded. This seeming Strength of Sin is not a sign that Sin is not a dying, but rather a sign that thou art Spiritually alive, because so very sensible of its Motions. The stronger the Opposition is which Grace makes against Sin, the stronger also will Sin seem to work, though indeed it never was weaker. If a strong natur'd Man fall into a little Sickness and Distemper, it seems more violent and raging in him, than a greater would in another of a weak Constitution; because the natural Vigour conflicts more with the Disease, he is unquiet and turbulent, and tosses too and fro, meerly because the Strength of Nature is impatient till the Sickness be removed. So is it here, if a gracious Soul fall into any sinful Distemper, what Conflicts and Agonies are there, as if he were in the very Pangs of Death? Doth this argue the Strength of Corruption? No, nothing less; it rather argues the Strength of Grace, which makes the Soul to wrastle thus impatiently, till the Corruption be overcome and removed. None so much complain of the Strength and Power of their Sins, as those in whom it is unto some good degree mortified, because they have that contrary Principle of Grace in them, which makes them sensible of the least Risings and Motions of it.

*Secondly,*



*Secondly*, Consider, Corruption may act strongest in the Soul, then when it is in it self weakest. It may be very strong in Acting, when it is but weak in Being. You know with what a great Blaze a wasted Candle goes out, and with what violent Pangs and Struglings Men use to depart this Life; so sometimes a mortified Lust makes such a Blaze as if it would set the whole Soul on Fire, when indeed it is but Expiring; it so struggles as if it would master Grace, when indeed it is but its last pull and Death-Pang. What is said of Christ when hanging on the Cross, *Mark 15. 37. He cried with a loud Voice, and then gave up the Ghost.* The same may I say of Corruption hanging on the Cross with a loud Voice in a Temptation, as if it were not only alive, but strong and vigorous; yea, but this loud Voice is many times its last Voice, and then gives up the Ghost, and draws its last Breath crying. And,

2.

*Thirdly*, Some accidental Improvement may make a Lust that is subdued and truly mortified, yet seem no way weakened, but rather much more active and vigorous than ever before. Sometimes the very *Crafs* and Temper of the Body may so alter as to cause a greater Propenseness to such or such a Corruption than formerly: and sometimes a Man may lie in the way of more Temptations than ever. Now upon such Advantages as these are, Corruption though it be mortified, yet it will be stirring; yea, and be stirring it may be more violently than ever it did while it was un-

3.

mortified; for though then it had more Strength and Power of its own, yet it had not such odds of Grace, as through these external Aids it hath gotten. And,

4. *Fourthly*, What is abated in the Strength of Lust's Temptations, is many times eked out by the Temptations of the Devil. And these though they are of different kinds, yet are so closely and so indiscernably pieced together, that the Soul not knowing what must be imputed to the Strength of its own Corruption, and what to the violent Assaults of the Devil, ascribes all to his Lust, and then sadly looks upon himself as an unmortified Sinner. And unmortified Sin when it moves and Tempts only of its own accord, will not seem to be so raging and impetuous, as a mortified Sin will when it is blown up by the Temptations and Injections of Satan. And therefore Christians not being able to distinguish (as indeed none sufficiently can) are necessarily troubled with many Fears and Doubts, whether or no Corruption which acts so strongly be at all weakened in them. And indeed, if the Devil helps any Mens Corruptions by his Temptations, they are especially those which Mortification hath already dealt with and subdued. In wicked Men he sees Lust able enough to subsist of it self, and to manage the affairs of its own Dominions, and therefore leaves them to the Plague of their own Heart to destroy them. But in the Children of God, where this Enemy is broken and conquer'd, he backs and enforceth, lends its Auxiliaries

aries of Objects, and Suggestions, and numberless Temptations, leads it on to the Combat, and by many Wiles and Methods enables it to molest, if not to foil the most conquering and mortified Christian; hereupon the Soul finding such a wonderful recruit of Strength and Vigour in Corruption, presently concludes it is all its own, and that certainly it was never yet subdued, never weakened in him. That's the last thing. So then although where true Mortification is exercised, there Corruption is weakened and doth decay, yet this decay is not always discernable. And thus much shall suffice to open to you what Mortification is.

II.

The next thing is to shew you what is of necessity required thereunto. You have already heard that Mortification consists of two parts, the weakning of the Habit, and the constant endeavour of repressing the Motions and restraining the Eruptions of Sin. Accordingly two things are thereunto necessarily required, First, a vital Principle of Grace that may weaken and destroy the Habit of Sin. And Secondly, the Influences of the Spirit of God, that may draw forth this inward Principle of Grace, and act it unto the suppressing of these Motions, and restraining these Eruptions.

*Two things necessarily required unto true Mortification.*

I.

First, Therefore, there cannot be any exercise of true Mortification, where there is not a vital Principle and Habit of Grace, radically to weaken and destroy it. 'Tis not Nature, 'tis not Conscience, 'tis not Education, 'tis not Conviction, nor is it

*A Principle of Grace is necessary unto true Mortification.*



any other Principle but Grace alone that is a fit match for Corruption. How can it with reason be supposed, that where there is nothing else but Sin, any thing should destroy the Power of Sin. What though one Lust quarrels with and contradicts another? And what though Conscience contradicts them both? yet the main Body of Lust is not concern'd in these petty quarrels. Some Lust or other must be Chief in the Soul, where Grace is not advanced as the prevailing Principle; and whether this Lust be set up, and that pulled down, is not much material, still the Regality and Tyranny of Sin is equally maintained and upheld by the one as by the other; and till Grace dissolves this Government, and be laid as the Axe to the Root of the Tree, all our Endeavours after Mortification will be but vain and fruitless Attempts, which Lust will easily baffle; And

Hence then by way of Confessary.

1. *First*, How necessary is it to our comfortable undertaking this great work of Mortification, to see that the first Grace of our Conversion be true and saving? Alas! where there never was Conversion wrought, there never was Mortification exercised. The killing of Sin is not a work that can be done by a dead but by a living Man. I should be loth to cast in Doubts and Scruples that should more trouble than benefit you; yet give me leave to say, that unless the Evidence of the Truth of your Grace be in some good proportion cleared up to you, your Hands must needs be faint and feeble.

feeble in conflicting against your Lusts: how know you that all your strugglings and strivings are not from weak and insufficient Principles, and consequently far short of Mortification? I speak it not that you should abate your Endeavours, but to quicken you, to look after the Truth and Sincerity of Grace; which when you have assured to your selves, you may be likewise certain, that though in all your Conflicts you may not find a visible decay of the Strength of Sin, yet it is in the Root and Principle of it insensibly weakened.

*Secondly,* See also what the sad and deplorable Condition of wicked Men is, who are Strangers to the Life of Grace. Without Mortification no Life is to be expected, without Grace no Mortification can be exercised; and what doth this when it is cast up amount to less than the eternal Damnation of such Men. The War which we are to wage against our Lusts, admits of no other terms but kill or be kill'd; either the Blood of your dearest Sins must be spilt, or the Blood of your precious Souls. Is it not now a sad thing for Men in such a merciless War to be thrust naked upon the sharp Swords of their Enemies? so it is with Sinners, who are many times by Conscience or Convictions thrust on to fight with armed and cruel Lusts, and yet have neither Weapons to wound them nor to defend themselves. What can be imagined more sad, than is the case of these Men? on the one Hand Conscience scourgeth them, on the other Sin

2.

wounds: Conscience drives them on, Corruption beats them back; and yet in all these Conflicts never can they obtain so much Success as to subdue the least and weakest Lust.

Now what should these Men do? should they give over this Opposition such as it is, and sit still under despair of Mortification? No, let them still strive and struggle, and make what Strength they can, and act as far against Sin as natural Conscience will carry them out unto. Let not the Doctrine you have heard to day of a carnal Man's impotency to mortifie any one Sin, slacken your Endeavours; still press upon it: For, *First*, Though all that you can do without Grace will not amount to a true Mortification, yet it may cause much outward Reformation; though hereby you cannot kill Corruption, yet you may mightily curb it. 'Tis true, this when done will not avail to save you, but yet suppose the least, it will avail to mitigate your Punishment, and abate the degrees of Torment: And certainly that Man never had a right apprehension of Hell, who doth not account the striking off the least degree of Wrath infinitely more worth than all the pains and trouble of an endeavoured Mortification. And,

2. *Secondly*, Though you cannot mortifie Corruption without Grace, yet when you oppose it with the Power you have, God may give you in the Grace that you want. While Carnal you cannot pray, nor perform any other spiritual Duty in Grace,

yet



yet you may and ought to do it for Grace. So here though your struggling against Sin be not Mortification without Grace, yet ought you to persist in it that it may be Mortification through Grace. How know you but that Conflict which was begun between the Flesh and the Flesh, may end in a Victory of the Spirit over the Flesh? Certainly it is far more probable that that Man should obtain true Mortification who earnestly strives against his Lusts, than he who willingly yields himself up as a Slave unto them. That's the first thing. Without Grace no one Lust can be mortified, and yet wicked Men are not hereby to be discouraged in their Endeavours.

*Secondly*, Another requisite unto Mortification, is the influence of the Spirit of God, drawing forth this inward Grace, and acting it to the suppressing of sinful Motions and sinful Eruptions. And therefore the Text tells us, *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie.* Though Grace be wrought in the Heart, yet it is not in our Power to act it; but the same Spirit that implanted it, he alone must excite it, he must marshal it and set it in array; he must head it and lead it on, and under his Conduct it will certainly prove Victorious. I might here at large shew you what Aid, Force, and Recruit, the Spirit brings us in for our Assistance in the work of Mortification, that the Apostle should here attribute it unto him. But I shall only briefly touch at this point, and so proceed.

II.  
The Influence of the Spirit necessary unto Mortification.  
How the Spirit enables us to be mortified.

First,

1. *First*, The Spirit discovers the Sin that is to be mortified, drags it out of its lurking Holes, strips it naked to the view of the Soul, uncaſeth its Deceits, diſcloſeth its Methods, ſhews the Uglineſs, Deformity and Hellishneſs of it, tells the Soul what a deſperate and ſworn Enemy it is againſt its eternal Happineſs, what an endleſs train of Woes, and Plagues, and Torments it draws after it: And hereby he highly exasperates the Heart to a Reſolution, that ſince it is ſo opportunely delivered into its Hands, it ſhall no more eſcape alive. Now this Aſſiſtance unto Mortification the Spirit lends us as he is the Authour of Con-  
*By diſcovering the Sin that is to be mortified.* viction. *John 16. 8. He ſhall convince the World of Sin.*

2. *Secondly*, The Spirit doth inwardly and really by the immediate working of his own Power, gradually weaken and deſtroy the Habit and Principle of Corruption. He with his own Hands wounds the old Man, breaks the hard Heart, takes out the ſtony Heart, and gives a Heart of Fleſh. He burns up and conſumes all that Droſs and Corruption that lies in the Heart, and is therefore compared unto Fire. *Matt. 3. 11. He ſhall Baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt and with Fire*; that is, with the Holy Ghoſt working as Fire, purifying and refining you as the Fire doth Metals; who is therefore called, *Iſai. 4. 4. The Spirit of Judgment and of Burning*. The Spirit of Judgment, that is, he judgeth between what is Fleſh and what is Spirit in the Heart, and ſeparates them, the one from the other; and  
*The Spirit immediately by his own Power weakens and deſtroys Sin.* the

the Spirit of Burning when they are so fevered; he preys as Fire on Scrubbe, upon that which is Corrupt and Fleshly, till it hath consumed it.

Thirdly, The Spirit brings home and applies the Efficacy of the Cross and Death of Jesus Christ unto the Soul, in which there is contained a Sin-mortifying Virtue. Our old Man was crucified with him, and therefore it is mortified in us. The Inscription on the Cross might have been not only Jesus, the King of the *Jews*, but Satan, Prince of this World, but Sin, that Tyrant of the Heart, are all here crucified. I might here insist on that Influence that the Death of Christ hath upon the Death of Sin, both as the meritorious and as the protatartical cause of it; but this I intend at large to speak of on another Head. Now what a lifeless thing were a crucified Christ, if the Spirit did not act him and bring him from the Cross, nay, bring him with the Cross into the Heart, and there conform it to the Fellowship of his Sufferings. Saith Christ concerning the Spirit, *John 16. 15. He shall take of mine and shew it unto you.* Indeed whatever Power there is either in the Death, Resurrection or Intercession of Christ to any spiritual End, it becomes effectual only by the Declaration and Application of it to the Soul by the Spirit.

2.  
*The Spirit applies the Death of Christ for the mortifying of Sin.*

Fourthly, the Spirit is both the Authour and Finisher of the whole work of Sanctification in us. We are said to be Sealed by him unto the day of Redemption, *Eph. 4. 30.* Now what are the Effects of a Seal.

4

First,



1. *First*, It gives Firmness and Stability to our spiritual Estate. Having received the Seal of the Spirit, we are inviolable, like that Book in the *Revelations*, which none in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell can break open.
2. *Secondly*, It gives Security and Assurance concerning our eternal Estate. Receiving the earnest of the Spirit, we also receive our Salvation ratified and confirmed to us as under God's Hand and Seal. But besides this,
3. *Thirdly*, A Seal imprints an Image upon the Wax, and receives the Impression of it : And indeed this is that on which the two former depend. A Seal adds no firmness nor assurance to a Deed, unless some Impression be thereby made. 'Tis but an airy Assurance, a void Evidence, an insignificant Charter for Heaven which hath not on it the Print of the Spirit's Seal. Now the Impress of this Seal is the very Image and Supercription of God, which when the Heart is like Wax made soft and pliable, is in a Man's Regeneration instamped upon it, and in the continual Progress of our Sanctification conformed more perfectly to the Similitude of God. This work of Sanctification which the Spirit begins and carries on hath but two parts ; As the one is a living unto Holiness, so the other is a dying unto Sin ; so that if the Holy Ghost be a sanctifying, he must also be a mortifying Spirit. The Image of God bears but this double Aspect, the one towards Grace, which is fresh, vigorous. and live-

ly ;

ly; the other towards Sin, which is pale, ghastly, and dying: And the same Spirit imprints both these at once upon the Soul, and therefore the Death of Sin is to be ascribed to him no less than the Life of Grace.

Now what abundant Support and Consolation may we hence Reap. Are not your Hearts ready to fail and sink within you, when you see such clusters of sinful Thoughts swarming about you, such violent hurries and cariers of sinful Desires and sinful Affections, such numberless Monsters of callow and unfledg'd Lusts, such a crowd of grown and noisom Temptations, able and well appointed for the Battel, such Snares laid for you without, such Treachery hatcht against you within? Do not your Hearts, I say, sink within you when you consider that you must break through all these? not as Men that run the Gauntlet, to receive a Scourge from one, and a Wound from another; but as Triumphant, as Conquerors, routing, scattering, slaughtering these Forces of Hell, and (what is worse) of your own Hearts. What Strength can you make? Will you muster up the Poverty, the Nakedness, the Weakness, the Languishment, the Wounds of your Souls, to atchieve this great Enterprize by? or will you bring forth and marshal your Graces? why alas! do you think to obtain the Conquest as *Jebusites* presumed by the blind and the lame, weak and imperfect Things; and yet besides these, what other Auxiliaries have you? what other

ther besides these? yes, the Spirit of God himself is pleased to enroll and list himself in this Warfare, and though we are Weak and have no Might against that great Company that comes up against us; yet not by Might, nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. What are the Deeds of the Body to the Power of the Spirit? what are Principalities, and Powers, and spiritual Wickednesses compared to that God who is far above all Principality and Power, who is the Spirit of Holiness? Go forth boldly therefore, and fight the Lord's Battels against these uncircumcised, though gygantick Lusts; the Sons of *Anak*, with whom thou seemest to thy self but as a Grasshopper, rush on thee; yet the Sword of the Lord and of *Gideon* can destroy the whole Host of them. Wilt thou shrink from this Engagement when thou hast so much the odds of thy Corruptions; when the Spirit of God stands by to encourage thee, to help and assist thee? The Prophet tells the *Israelites*, *Isai. 31. 3. That the Egyptians Horses were but Flesh and not Spirit, and therefore their help was but vain.* I may tell you, your Enemies are but Flesh, *Fleshly Lusts that war against the Soul*; but your helper is the Spirit, and therefore their Opposition is in vain. Never yet was it known that that Soul who engaged the Spirit of God in the Quarrel, that ever he came off with less than a Victory. Though thou hast formerly gone out in thine own strength, and thereby betrayed thine own weakness, and hast got nothing

but



but many a deep Wound, many a sad Fall, many a sore Bruise; yet now call in the Spirit to thine Assistance, he can root out and destroy every prevailing Lust, he can reinforce thy scattered Graces, he can revive thy drooping and fainting Soul, he can strengthen thy feeble Knees, and thy weak Hands, and make thee more than a Conqueror. *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creatour of the ends of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? He giveth power to the faint; and to those that have no might he increaseth strength. Isai. 40. 28, 29.*

Thus you see wherein true Mortification consists, in the habitual weakning of the Principle of Corruption, and in the actual curbing of its Motions; and what is thereunto necessarily required, the inward Root of Grace, and the Influences of the Holy Spirit to draw it forth and act it.

The next thing that I shall proceed unto is, to lay down some Particulars where by you may examine and try your Mortification, whether it be right and saving. If you value eternal Life it self, you will likewise value that Light, though it be but in its first Dawn and weakest Gleanings, that shall discover your Interest in it. This Interest stands upon nothing more sure than our Mortification: *If ye mortifie ye shall live.* Yea, but we are in this Work subject to Mistakes and Errours, so that it is not a more difficult thing rightly to exercise

ercise it, than it is to know when we do so. Will it not be a sad and astonishing thing, when Men who have been Professours of Religion, Christians of no mean Account both in their own as also in the Eyes of others; yet shall at last be dragged down to Hell, and there be eternally Murthered by those very Sins, the Mortification of which they made their best and clearest Evidence for Heaven? The Trial therefore being of so vast Concernment, I shall give it you in these following particulars.

I.  
*Trial of  
Mortification.*

*First*, Let thy contending against Sin be what it will or can be, yet if it be not joined with a sincere Endeavour after an universal Obedience unto God in the performance of Duties, it is not, neither can it be, true Mortification. This is that which many deceive themselves in, they find a perplexing Lust within, that troubles their Conscience, disturbs their Peace; the exceeding Guilt of it fills them with Bitterness, Dread, Horrour; and still it will be thus with them till they have beaten it down and subdued it; they vow, and pray, and watch, and strive against it; they cut off all Occasions that should draw it forth, all Provisions that should relieve and support it, and do whatsoever may be done towards the killing of it; yea, but all this while they are negligent and careless in other Duties which are not of so immediate Concernment to that particular Lust; they do not strive to follow God in all his ways, if they think one Duty will do it, they

they neglect all the rest : Let not such Men think they do indeed mortifie any one Corruption. This is a very common Distemper, and nothing almost more ordinary, than for Men to struggle against Corruption, and yet neglect Duty. If Vows, Purposes, and Resolutions be in their Apprehensions the most opposite means for the beating down of that Sin that disquiets them, these they make and possibly keep them; but for other Duties, as Prayer, Meditation, Reading, the keeping alive an holy and spiritual Frame of Heart, and such Duties as should fill up the whole Course and Measure of Christianity, these they live in a wretched neglect, if not contempt of: Let such Men know that whatever their Success in this way may seem to be, yet they never truly mortified any one Corruption. He only is the mortified Man that labours and endeavours after universal Obedience. 'Tis not the vehement Opposition that you make against any particular Lust, that argues you to be mortified Christians, but rather the universal and general Frame and Temper of your Hearts towards Holiness. And therefore saith the Apostle 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit*; there's, true Mortification, *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness*, that is, let us mortifie in our selves all Sin and Corruption: Well, but how must this be done? why says the Apostle, *Perfecting Holiness in the fear of God*; that is, giving Holiness all its parts, that it shall not be defective in any one Duty,

F

then



then and not till then will Lust be to any purpose mortified, when a perfect Holiness is aim'd at and endeavour'd in the whole Course of a Man's Life and Conversation. Now try your selves by this, when you are troubled with a perplexing Lust, be it what it will, which for your own quiet, you must subdue, you use against it those means and helps which you think are most directly destructive of it, this is well: yea, but let me ask you, setting aside that Corruption, Is not the general Frame and Course of your Lives estranged from Communion with God, careless and neglectful of holy and spiritual Duties, vain, earthly, sensual, carnal? If it be, however thou mayst prevail over that particular Corruption, yet conclude upon it, thou knowest not what true Mortification means.

2.  
Trial of  
Mortification  
27.

*Secondly*, That Mortification is not true not saving that opposeth it self against Corruption, only with the Exception and Reservation of one particular Sin. Never deceive your selves, though you should have contested even all your days against all the Lusts your Hearts were ever conscious unto, except one, you never mortified any one. One Lust that hath obtain'd a pass from you to go to and fro unmolested, to deal and traffick with the Heart undisturbed; will be as certain Perdition to your Souls, as if every Lust that lies lurking within should rage forth into act. In a Man, it's true, there are some such Parts, that if you wound him there, you need not wound him any where else; if

you

you wound the Heart, you need not strike the Head. But this old Man hath no such Vitals, 'tis not sufficient to destroy him, that you wound him in any one Part, but he must be made as our natural Condition is described, *from the Crown of the Head to the Soal of the Foot, full of Wounds and Bruises.* 'Tis in vain to cry with *Namaan*, *the Lord pardon thy Servant in this, or in that thing*, dost thou know what thou cravest? Why 'tis not this or that Sin alone that are unmortified, but all the rest are as unmortified as these, and (should God pardon these unto thee; yet) would as soon condemn thee. Now try your selves by this, when you go forth against your Sins to battel; is there none that your Eye spares, nor your Heart pities? doth the Sword of Mortification drink the Heart Blood of every Lust, when they fly for shelter into your very Bosom? can you rend them from thence, and slay them before the Lord; when Corruption cries out, oh! spare such a pleasing, delightful Lust, such an advantageous and profitable Sin; can you answer it with an holy Disdain, were it yet more pleasant, more profitable, yet die it must and shall? Can you then cut off your right Hand, when it is lifted up to plead for Mercy? can you then pluck out your right Eye, when it sheds Tears to move your Compassion? if so, this indeed is to exercise Mortification aright; Corruption must at last needs fall dead at your Feet, where there is no Part or Member of it left unwounded. But

if in all thy dealings against Corruption there be any one Sin that thou allowest and indulgest to thy self, how great soever thy wrestlings and contendings are against all other, thou never yet experimentally knewest what belongs to Mortification. One allowed Sin is Vent enough for the Body of Corruption to take breath at, and as long as thou permittest it this breathing place, all Endeavours to destroy it are utterly frustrate and in vain.

2.  
Kind of  
Mortification.

*Thirdly*, If thou wouldst judge of the Truth of thy Mortification, then see what those Arguments and Considerations are whereby thou dost actually deal against thy Lusts. Now these Arguments belong but to two Heads; either they are Legal, and such as are drawn only from a sad Reflexion on the end and issue of Sin, which is Shame, Death, Hell and Destruction. Or else they are Evangelical, taken from the Nature of Sin, as being a Transgression and Offence against a gracious Father, against a crucified and bleeding Saviour, against a patient and long-suffering Spirit, and many other like Aggravations which work kindly and ingenuously upon the Heart of a Child of God. Put it now to the question, when a Temptation assaileth thee, with what Weapons dost thou resist it, what Considerations dost thou over-awe thy Heart with? Dost thou only run down to Hell to fetch Arguments against Sin from thence? Canst thou no where else quench these fiery Darts, but in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone? Can nothing

keep



keep thee from Sinning but only the Whip and the Rack, Wrath, Vengeance, Horrors, and such dreadful Things, which while thy Conscience thunders in thine Ears, it makes thy Soul an Hell, and it self becomes thy Tormentour? If this be all, know that thy Affections are wofully intangled in the Sin, and thou art fully resolved upon the Commission of it, if there were no Punishment to follow. Thou mayst indeed by this means be frightened and scared from Sin, but never mortified to it. But now the evangelical Considerations which a Child of God makes use of to mortifie Sin by, though they work not with that Dread and Terroure, yet are they far more Effectual; he sees Sin in its ugly Nature, in that spot, stain, and defilement that it would bring upon his Soul, and this causeth in him a true Hatred of it; he saith under a Temptation, what, shall I subject a noble and spiritual Soul made capable of enjoying the God of Heaven? shall I prostitute it to the filthy Allurements of a base Lust? shall I blot out and deface the Image of God instampt upon me, and degrade my self from the Glory of his Resemblance, to be conformable to the Devil? Can I commit this Sin which heretofore hath drawn Blood from my Saviour, and now seeks to draw Blood from my Conscience? Was not this the very Sin that squeezed clotted Blood from him, and was a full Load for God himself to bear? did he die to free me from its Condemnation, and shall I upon every slight

Temptation rush into the Commission of it? Is there any thing so attractive in it as to counterpoise the infinite and unsearchable Love of Christ. No, Oh Lord! thy Love constraineth me, I cannot do this thing and Sin against so free, so rich, so infinite Mercy and Goodness. Thus a gracious Heart argues against a Temptation, and prevails unto a true Mortification.

*Objection.*

But may some say, May we not make use of Legal Arguments, of Considerations drawn from the Wrath of God, the Wages of Sin, the everlasting Damnation to which Sinners are appointed, to oppose against a Temptation to sin? Are these of no Efficacy unto Mortification?

To this I answer :

I.  
*Answer.*

*First,* You may and ought in dealing against your Lusts to use such Arguments as these are : why else doth our Saviour inculcate the Fear of God upon his Disciples, from the Consideration of his Wrath and Power? *Fear him who is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell Fire, yea, I say unto you Fear him.* And why doth the Apostle here in the Text, threaten the believing Romans with Death if they live after the Flesh, unless these Considerations may be made use of even by gracious Souls against their Sins? 'Tis no other than a loose Notion to think the only Incentive to Obedience, and the only Check and Restraint of Sin, is the Consideration of the Love of God. 'Tis true these Gospel Arguments are most prevailing and constraining, yet let not him with whom the Fear

of God's Wrath hath no Sway to keep him from sinning think himself an high attainer; 'tis rather a stupidity, till we are got past all desert of Hell to be fearless of it.

*Secondly*, Though these Arguments and Legal Considerations may of themselves prevail to keep us from the Commission of Sin, yet they cannot prevail to the Mortification of it. Where there are not other Considerations besides these working, these never bring off the Heart, but only hold the Hands from Sin. Nay, if when a Temptation is stirring in the Children of God themselves, they only answer it by these Legal Considerations, they dare not commit it for fear of Hell and Wrath hereafter, or of Shame here; and there be no Arguments drawn from the Love of God, and the Relation they stand in to him, from the Death of Christ, and the Obligation which that lays upon them to Obedience, from the Deformity of the Sin to which they are tempted, from the Repugnancy and Antipathy that is in their regenerate Part against it; the abstaining from the Commission of that Sin is not Mortification, but only Restraint, even in the Children of God themselves.

2.

*Thirdly*, These Legal Arguments and Considerations, may be of great use and moment in a subserviency unto the Mortification of Sin.

3.

*First*, They may hold a Temptation or a Corruption at a bay, till Gospel Considerations come in to beat it down. Usual-

1.



ly the very first risings of our Hearts against a Corruption is from the dangerous Consequences of it, from that Wrath and Vengeance that is due to it, and will follow upon it; now this stops the Sin and puts the Soul to a Demur, and though this cannot destroy the Corruption, yet it holds it so long, till the new Man calls in aid from Gospel Arguments to mortifie it.

2. *Secondly*, These Legal Considerations when mixt with Gospel Motives make them work more strongly and more effectually unto Mortification. The Consideration of the infinite Wrath of God heightens and aggrandiseth the infinite Love of God in redeeming us from it, and so makes it far more enforcing unto Mortification.

4. *Fourthly*, 'Tis an ill sign that that Heart is very much unmortified, where a Temptation or Corruption can break through all Gospel Considerations used against it, and is stopt from breaking into act, only by Legal Arguments. When a Temptation to sin assaults thee, thou runnest it may be to the Love of God, to the Death of Christ, to the ugly Nature of Sin, to the beautiful Nature of Holiness, to beat it down by these (the best and most effectual) Considerations; if these do not prevail, but the Lust and Temptation still tumultuates, and is ready just to break forth into act, thy Heart is all on a Flame with it; and then possibly a thought of Hell, of Vengeance, of everlasting Wrath, starts up suddenly and quashes and quenches this Temptation

tation as Water cast on a Fire; if this be usual with you, your Hearts are much unmortified, and your Affections strongly engaged unto Sin. That's the third trial.

*Fourthly*, A truly mortified Man sees the great evil of, and chiefly labours against those Lusts, which others who act from any other Principle lower than true Grace, either take no notice of, or else do not oppose, and these are (1.) Inward Heart Sins, and (2.) Spiritual Wickednesses. This is a most sure and infallible Character.

4.

*Trial of  
Mortification.*

I.

*First*, A mortified Man sets himself especially against inward Heart Sins, against the Bubblings of sinful Thoughts, and the up-  
roars of sinful Affections, and the bent of sinful Desires; those lurking and invisible Lusts, which though an Hypocrite suffer, yea though he foster, yet may he have a very large Testimonial to his Saintship, to which almost all the World will be ready to set their Hands. These doth a truly mortified Christian principally complain of, and strive against; and in this indeed consists the very Truth and Sincerity of Mortification. That what the Apostle saith, *Rom. 2. 28, 29. That is not Circumcision that is outward in the Flesh, but that which is of the Heart in the Spirit*: so I may say, that is not Mortification which is outward in the Flesh, but that which is of the Heart in the Spirit. There may be a kind of dead Palfey and Numbness seize upon the outward Members of the Body, when yet the Heart beats strong and quick, and the Brain works with sprightful and vigorous

ly the very first risings of our Hearts against a Corruption is from the dangerous Consequences of it, from that Wrath and Vengeance that is due to it, and will follow upon it; now this stops the Sin and puts the Soul to a Demur, and though this cannot destroy the Corruption, yet it holds it so long, till the new Man calls in aid from Gospel Arguments to mortifie it.

2. *Secondly*, These Legal Considerations when mixt with Gospel Motives make them work more strongly and more effectually unto Mortification. The Consideration of the infinite Wrath of God heightens and aggrandiseth the infinite Love of God in redeeming us from it, and so makes it far more enforcing unto Mortification.

4. *Fourthly*, 'Tis an ill sign that that Heart is very much unmortified; where a Temptation or Corruption can break through all Gospel Considerations used against it, and is stopt from breaking into act, only by Legal Arguments. When a Temptation to sin assaults thee, thou runnest it may be to the Love of God, to the Death of Christ, to the ugly Nature of Sin, to the beautiful Nature of Holiness, to beat it down by these (the best and most effectual) Considerations; if these do not prevail, but the Lust and Temptation still tumultuates, and is ready just to break forth into act, thy Heart is all on a Flame with it; and then possibly a thought of Hell, of Vengeance, of everlasting Wrath, starts up suddenly and quashes and quenches this Temptation



tation as Water cast on a Fire; if this be usual with you, your Hearts are much unmortified, and your Affections strongly engaged unto Sin. That's the third trial.

*Fourthly*, A truly mortified Man sees the great evil of, and chiefly labours against those Lusts, which others who act from any other Principle lower than true Grace, either take no notice of, or else do not oppose, and these are (1.) Inward Heart Sins, and (2.) Spiritual Wickednesses. This is a most sure and infallible Character.

4.  
Trial of  
Mortification.

*First*, A mortified Man sets himself especially against inward Heart Sins, against the Bubblings of sinful Thoughts, and the up-  
roars of sinful Affections, and the bent of sinful Desires; those lurking and invisible Lusts, which though an Hypocrite suffer, yea though he foster, yet may he have a very large Testimonial to his Saintship, to which almost all the World will be ready to set their Hands. These doth a truly mortified Christian principally complain of, and strive against; and in this indeed consists the very Truth and Sincerity of Mortification. That what the Apostle saith, *Rom. 2. 28, 29. That is not Circumcision that is outward in the Flesh, but that which is of the Heart in the Spirit*: so I may say, that is not Mortification which is outward in the Flesh, but that which is of the Heart in the Spirit. There may be a kind of dead Palfey and Numbness seize upon the outward Members of the Body, when yet the Heart beats strong and quick, and the Brain works with sprightful and vigorous

I.

ous Motions and Conceptions; so truly is it in this case, the old Man may sometimes be benumbed in his outward Limbs, and deadned as to the executive part of sinning, when yet the Head may work busily in moulding and shaping sinful Objects, and the Heart may eagerly beat and pant after them. 'Tis usually the highest result and upshot of a wicked Man's Care and Endeavour, to keep Lust from boiling over, from raising Smoak and Ashes about him; and if he can attain unto this, let the Heart be brim full of Sin, let the Thoughts steep, soak and stew in malicious, unclean, worldly Contrivances and Designs, yet these inward Motions and Ebullitions, he laments not, he suppresseth not. Now though possibly it might seem an easy Task to mortifie such little, naked, infant things as Thoughts are, that flutter up and down in the Soul, and that a slight stroak will serve to lay them dead; yet certainly, that Christian who by Experience knows what it is to deal with his own Heart, finds it infinitely more difficult to beat down one sinful Thought from rising and tumultuating within, than it is to keep in many a sinful Thought from breaking forth into act; so that here lies the very stress and hardship of Mortification, in fighting against such Shadows, such Apparitions, such little Entities as Thoughts are. Now there are these three things that make this so very difficult.

*Three  
things make  
it difficult  
to mortifie  
our  
Thoughts.*

I.

*First*, Because the first Bubblings of these sinful Emanations from the Fountain and Spring.

Spring-Head of Corruption is not in our Power to hinder. External Actions fall under Deliberation, and they usually are sifted by Censure, and guided by Advice and Counsel; and this gives us advantage, either to let them loose, or to restrain them at our pleasure. But who deliberates of Thoughts, or consults of first Motions? These first-born actions of the Soul fall not under any previous Considerations to examine or forbid them, and therefore it is not in our Power to make them good or evil, holy or sinful, but according as the Habit and Principle within is, so they spontaneously start up; holy Thoughts from a gracious Principle, and sinful Thoughts from a corrupt one. Nay, those things that are the best and most effectual means for Mortification, yet cannot keep down sinful Thoughts, they will swarm and buz about the Soul in praying, in hearing, in the most holy and spiritual Duties that we can perform; and when we should be wholly taken up in Communion with God, the whole Duty it may be is necessarily spent in fraying these away; and when we should be intently and exaltedly spiritual, all that we can do, is but to keep our Hearts from being long together sinful. It fares with us as it fared with *Abraham* when sacrificing, *Gen. 15. 11.* The Text tells us, *when the Fowles came down upon the Carcasses of the Sacrifices, that Abraham drove them away.* These Fowles are our sinful Thoughts, they fly in the Air at random, we cannot hinder them from lighting, and it may be

on



on our Sacrifices too; all that we can do, is to drive them away, that they may not devour, though they do and will pollute. The first rise of sinful Thoughts we cannot oppose, their continuance and abiding we may; yea, we ought always so to compose our selves in such a frame, as that Corruption may not occasionally be stirred in us, yet it is impossible altogether to keep our selves from the inward Motions and Estuations of it.

2. *Secondly*, Sinful Thoughts lie unespied and undiscerned by our selves. How often do they steal away the Heart insensibly, and carry it very far unto sinful Objects unawares? that when we reflect back to see the workings of our Thoughts, we wonder many times how and where they crept in; we find them very busie, but when they got in we know not, no, nor how long they have continued; unless we keep a strict Guard and a narrow Watch upon our Hearts, these subtile and deceitful Lusts will undermine us, get within and possess us e'er we can take notice of them. This is the continual vexation of the best Christians, that even in Duties a vain and impertinent Thought runs away with their Hearts, that the Heat and Warmth of their Affections, the Life, Vigour, and Spirituality of their Souls in Communion with God, is lost oftentimes e'er they perceive it; they at last perhaps find out this thieving deceitful Thought, and mourn over it, but yet know not when or how it entered, no, nor cannot track it so much as  
by

by any Footsteps. This lurking deceitful abode of an unperceived Thought, is, or may be, the sad and just Complaint of every Soul among us. The Apostle cries out of it, *Rom. 7. 21. When I would do good, evil is present with me*; 'tis present, here I find it, but how or when it rose, that I know not. And then,

*Thirdly*, 'Tis very difficult throughly to convince Men of the great guilt and evil that there is in sinful Thoughts, and this also makes it so difficult to mortifie them; because they are but things of a small and minute Being, therefore Men think they carry in them but small guilt and little danger. Every Man that hath but a remnant of Conscience left in him, will beware of gross, black and grisly Sins, that carry the brand of Hell and Damnation visibly stamp upon their Foreheads; such as he who can without reluctancy commit them, must needs own himself for the apparent Offspring of the Devil: but for an invisible Thought, a Notion, an airy Idea, a thing next nothing, this certainly can hurt no one; by a malicious Thought I injure no Man, by a covetous Thought I grind nor extort from no Man; and what so great evil then can there be in this? 'Tis true indeed, wert thou only to deal with Men, whom thy Thoughts touch not, there were no such great evil in them; but when thou hast to do with an immaterial and spiritual God, before whom thy Thoughts appear as substantial and considerable as thy outward acts; then know that a Thought

as

3.

as slight and thin a Being as it is, is yet an hainous Provocation of his Majesty, a wretched Violation of his Law, and will be (if not mortified) a fearful Damnation and Destruction to thine own Soul. This doth lie at the bottom of all that neglect that Men are generally guilty of in opposing sinful Thoughts, they think them (which indeed is as bad a Thought as any other) harmless and indifferent things. As we use to call little Infants innocent Babes, though indeed they are born into the World with an Hell of Sin in their Natures. Some Men are apt to think the sinful Thoughts which they conceive, and with which they travel, to be innocent instant things, though indeed every one of them be no other than a Firebrand of Hell. Some Thoughts we are wont to accuse and condemn as being impertinent; the Truth is, 'tis a name too slight and favourable, there is no such thing as an impertinent Thought, no, there is not any thing in your whole lives of greater concernment, and weight, and moment than what your Thoughts are; whatever they be, their Influence reacheth no shorter than unto what an Eternity of Life or Death extends to. Now if this persuasion did indeed take hold of Men, were it possible that they should thus indulge themselves in a vain, frothy, idle, nay let me call them sinful and pernicious Thoughts, Thoughts so effectually destructive? were it possible that they should so closely brood on these Cockatrice Eggs, which bring forth nothing

but



but Serpents to sting them to eternal Death? were it possible that they should roll and tofs a Sin to and fro in the fancy, and thereby recompence the Devil and their own Corruptions, for the squeamishness of Conscience in hindring the commission of it? Certainly herein Men bewray great unacquaintedness with Mortification, whenas those Sins that they dare not act, yet they dare with complacency and delight contemplate and feed upon in their own Thoughts. Turn therefore your Eyes inward; when the swarm of Lusts is up, and much noise and buzzing is made by Corruptions, by Temptations, which yet some external Principles will not suffer to break forth; where then do they flutter? Do they settle in the Heart? Dost thou fire them there? Do thy Thoughts like so many intellectual Bees fly abroad and suck sweetness out of every sinful Object, to lay and hoard it up in the fancy? Canst thou for the satisfying of Conscience, restrain the outward actings of Sin; and yet for the satisfying of Corruption, tolerate and allow the inward workings of it? Certain it is, thou never yet knewest what belongs to true and saving Mortification; and it were happy for thee if such an imaginary Sinner might suffer only an imaginary Death.

But now a truly mortified Christian, as he is watchful to keep Sin from breaking forth into outward act, so is he especially careful to resist and quell the Sins of the inward Man, the Sins of the Heart. And that,  
*First,*

1. *First*, Because he knows these are the Sins that are most of all contrary to Grace, and do most of all weaken and waſt it. Heart Sins lie as ſo many Worms beating and gnawing the very Root of Grace, whereas outward Sins, any otherwiſe than as they proceed from the Heart, are but as Caterpillars that devour only the verdure and flouriſhing of Grace. How can Grace breath or ſtir in ſuch a crowd of ſinful Thoughts, and ſinful Affections that oppreſs it? How can it grow and thrive among ſuch multitudes of Weeds that choak and ſtarve it? There is no room for Grace to live, at leaſt not to act, till Mortification pulls up and throws out of the Heart all that traſh which before filled it. And then,
2. *Secondly*, He knows likewiſe that when the Heart is brim full of Corruption, the leaſt jog of a Temptation will make it run over. And therefore,
3. *Thirdly*, He looks upon it as the moſt eaſy and compendious way of Mortification to begin at the Heart. Thence it is that all the outward Sins of a Man's Life and Converſation receive their ſupply. What ſaith Chriſt, *Matt. 15. 19. Out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, falſe Witneſs, Blaſphemies.* Whence are the Streams ſupplied but from the Fountain? and if this be dried up, thoſe muſt of neceſſity fail. Thoſe corrupt Streams that flow forth too apparently in Mens Actions, proceed all from that bitter Fountain that continually

tinually bubbles up in the Heart; and as the Exercise of Mortification dries up this Fountain, so the Floods of Ungodliness must needs run low by Consequence. This therefore is very rationally the great and main Care of a mortified Man; to keep his Heart clean from sinful Thoughts, sinful Desires, and sinful Motions and Affections. And therefore God calls upon *Jerusalem*, *Jer. 4. 14. O Jerusalem, wash thine Heart from Wickedness, that thou mayst be saved*: That is, mortifie the Sins of thy Heart, that thou mayst live. Well, but what Sins are these? It is intimated in the following words, *How long shall vain Thoughts lodge within thee?* How long? truly they are likely to lodge for ever within; and they are never like to lodge only within, where all Endeavours of Mortification are only external and outward. 'Tis in vain to strive to keep sinful Thoughts within, unless we endeavour also to destroy them within; they will else break forth notwithstanding all the Care that is used in Restraint, and over-run the Soul with the guilt of some scandalous Conscience-wounding Sin or other. In your strugglings therefore against Sin, and in your endeavours for the mortifying of it, look what it is that you chiefly resist. Do you not content your selves that you have beaten Corruption from the Out-works into the very Fort; that whereas before it sallied forth at pleasure, wasted and havockt your Consciences, gasht and wounded your Souls even to the very Death, triumphed over

G

you



you as conquered Slaves and Vassals ; now it is pent up in a narrower room and compass ? Do not you think it enough that you lay a close siege unto it by Conviction, Conscience, Legal Terrours ; and by these so shut it up, that though it may stir and tumultuate within, yet it cannot easily break forth to your disturbance ? Is not this Restraint sufficient, but must you still pursue it even into the very Heart, and when it hath hid it self in a sinful Thought, there stifle and kill it ? This indeed is a sign for good, that this great Work of Mortification is not only begun by you, but also brought to some Perfection. If I may be allowed so to express it, the very Heart of Sin lies in the Sins of the Heart : And if we would indeed mortifie it, it is there that we must both aim and strike. That's the first part of this particular Trial. He that exerciseth Mortification aright, doth principally set himself against inward and Heart Sins, which an unmortified Man takes least notice of, and least resists.

2.  
*Mortification opposeth spiritual Sins.*

*Secondly,* A truly mortified Man is very careful and laborious in opposing and subduing spiritual Sins and Wickednesses. Spiritual Sins, you will say, why, are there any such ? Graces may well be termed spiritual, being the immediate effects of the holy Spirit of God ; but are Sins become spiritual too ? By spiritual Sins therefore, I mean, such as principally reside in the more refined and exalted Part of Man, in the very flower and top of his Being, called

led therefore by the Apostle. *Eph. 4. 23.* *The Spirit of the Mind*; the Mind it self is a spiritual Part, but here the Apostle makes this Mind double refin'd, and extracts a Spirit out of a Spirit. So that those Sins that are chiefly conversant about the Mind, the Spirit of a Man, and have but little Commerce and Fellowship with that dull dreggy Part the Body, they are spiritual Sins: Such are Pride, Envy, Hypocrisie, Unbelief, Hardness of Heart, a slighting of the Tenders of Salvation made by Christ, a froward quenching of the good Motions of the Holy Spirit. These are spiritual Sins, and these are the Sins that a Child of God bends his strongest Endeavours against in the Work of Mortification, and that upon a threefold account.

*First*, Because these spiritual Sins, though they are not of that gross Scandal and Infamy among Men, yet they are Sins of the deepest and blackest Guilt and Defilement in themselves and in the sight of God. And therefore when Christ would rake up the very bottom of Hell; who lies there? not the Swearer, not the Drunkard, not the unclean Person, not the Worldling, nor any such gross and brutish Sinners; but the Hypocrite, that spiritual, that refined and exalted Sinner. *Matt. 24. 51.* Could we see Impenitency, Unbelief, Hardness of Heart, with the same Eyes that God sees them, they would appear more ugly and deformed, than those foul and notorious Wickednesses which cause an indelible Shame and Reproach upon the places

I.  
Reason.

where such live who are guilty of them, and that because they deface the choicest part of the Image of God, that wherein the Soul doth nearest resemble and transcribe its Original. This a gracious Heart in part discovers, it sees somewhat of the loathsome Nature of these spiritual Sins, which before it did not, and therefore now so earnestly opposeth them. And,

2.  
*Reason.* *Secondly,* Because these spiritual Sins are the most dangerous and destructive of all others. I do not say that the gross outward acts of Sin do not deserve Hell; yes, they do, yea, and a scorching Portion of it too: yet, I say, if any who hath been a Sinner, though to a very high degree of Scandal, doth eternally perish; 'tis not because of those outward Sins meerly, but because of Impenitency, of Unbelief, of Hardness of Heart, of slighting and undervaluing Jesus Christ, and refusing the gracious Terms of the Gospel. They are only these spiritual Sins that do shut Men out of Heaven, and shut them up in Hell, and seal them unto everlasting Condemnation: Gross Sins do this meritoriously, but these alone do it eventually; these do certainly effect it as being Sins against the only Remedy appointed. And then,

3.  
*Reason.* *Thirdly,* Because they are Sins that of all other are most like unto the Sins of the Devil. What are the Sins of the Devil? not Intemperance and Luxury, those swinish and brutish Lusts, wherein Sensualists wallow; these are not suited to the immaterial Nature of the Devil, and are so far below



below him that he can neither act nor relish them. But intellectual Sins that are strained and clarified from such feculency, as Pride, Malice, Hatred of God and Goodness, Stoutness and Stubbornness of Heart against God. These are the Sins which this great and wretched Spirit doth with an implacable Rage and Spite eternally commit; and accordingly as wicked Men are hellishly improved in these Sins, so do they nearer resemble the Devil. And therefore a Child of God is of all others especially watchful over, and industrious against these spiritual Sins. Now try your selves by this; you rush not possibly into the same excess of Riot with other Men, you resist Temptations, and beat down Motions and Inclinations to outward, gross, self-condemning Sins: Yea, but did you ever see, did you ever strive against the Pride, the Hypocrisie, the Unbelief and Hardness of your Hearts? Do you know what it is to maintain a War against these spiritual Sins? Can you abhor and resist a Temptation to slight Christ, to grieve his Spirit, as well as to any outward scandalous Sin? If so, this is a good sign that you do indeed rightly exercise Mortification. But if you are only cleansed from the Pollutions of the Flesh, and not also from the Pollutions of the Spirit? If while you war and strive against fleshly Lusts, these Spiritual and Gospel Sins are harbour'd and nestled in your Hearts, know assuredly that whatsoever seeming Victories and Conquests you may obtain over them, yet they are not mortified.

5. *Fiſibly*, Another mark for Tryal may be this ; If Sin be mortified and dead in you, then you alſo are mortified and dead unto Sin. This you will ſay is very certain, but how ſhall we know whether we be dead to Sin ? In answer unto this, I ſhall give you theſe two particulars to try it by.

*Trial of  
Mortification.*

1. *Fiſt*, When there is little or no ſutable-  
neſs betwixt Sin and thy Soul, then art  
thou dead unto it. Thou ſeeſt no Beau-  
ty, no Deſirableneſs, thou taſteſt no Sweet-  
neſs, findeſt no Delight in it, this is to  
be dead to it ; and accordingly as the de-  
grees of this are, ſo art thou dying unto  
Sin. When the Appetite fails, and the  
Stomach nauſeates that Food which before  
pleaſed it ; 'tis a ſign that the Man is ſick,  
and it may be dying ; So when that Appe-  
rite which before was greedy of Sin, and  
ſwallowed it down as a ſweet Morſel,  
comes not only to leave it, but to loath it ;  
'tis a good ſign that Man is Sin-ſick, Sin  
is in him decaying and dying. *I am cru-  
cified to the World, and the World to me,*  
ſays the Apoſtle, *Gal. 6. 14.* So is a mor-  
tified Chriſtian crucified unto Sin, and Sin  
to him. What Delight or Pleaſure can a-  
ny Object bring to a crucified Man ? Truly  
Sin, when the Soul is once crucified unto  
every finful Object, is like that Draught  
of Gall and Vinegar offered to Chriſt upon  
the Croſs, it hath nothing in it but Sharp-  
neſs and Bitterneſs. Now try thy ſelf by  
this ; is there no more agreeableneſs be-  
tween Sin and thy Soul, than there is be-  
tween

tween a sick and a dying Man, and the things of this Life? Canst thou reject those Temptations with indignation which before thou closedst with, with eagerness? Doth thy Appetite, thy Will and Affections loath and nauseate those Sins which formerly thou swallowedst down with Delight and Greediness? This indeed is a sign thou art mortified and dead to thy Sins. But if still thou findest as much Sweetness and Delicousness in Sin as ever, if thou hidest and rollest it under thy Tongue as a sweet Morsel, if still it be agreeable and most pleasing to thee, thou mayst indeed be dead; dead, not unto Sin, but dead in Sins and Trespases.

*Secondly*, If thou art mortified and dead unto Sin, thou art then enlivened and quickned unto Holiness. What saith the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 11. Reckon your selves to be dead indeed unto Sin; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ.* To be alive unto Holiness, what's that? Why, it is to be lively in Holiness; to have the Heart and Affections quickned to it, to be carried out strongly and vigorously in it; this is to be alive. Certainly a lumpish, dull, heavy Professour, that can hardly make a shift to jog on in a form of Religion, that performs every thing that belongs to Holiness, without Life, Spirit and Vivacity, must be very much unmortified; he is not yet dead to his Sins, otherwise he would be more quick and lively in his Graces. 'Tis impossible that any Man can be thus twice dead; what, dead to Sin and yet dead to



Holiness too! no, the Death of Sin is the Life of Grace; and therefore where you find the one strong and active, you may conclude the other is weak and languishing.

Now if the old Man be indeed crucified within you, these particulars of examination do as it were shew you the print of the Nails and of the Spear that wounded it; and they bid you thrust your Hands into its Side, that you may be more certain of its Death, and in that certainty rejoice. It were happy for us, if without self-flattery we could from these things draw an Evidence of our Mortification; but it is to be feared, that they serve rather to shew us what a strange thing it is in the World, yea, how much a stranger even in *Israel*. How few do at all resist the swing and carier of Corruption; of those that do, how few do it from a right Principle, and by right means? If perhaps some few such there be (as certainly some such there are, though but a few) yet even their strugglings and wrestlings against Corruption are so impertinent and trifling, that did they not presume them to flow from an inward Principle of Grace, they could not but be ashamed either to think or call them Mortification. The generality and common huddle of the World do so securely live after the Flesh, as if they were always to live in the Flesh, or as if they were already resolved rather to be cast into Hell with their old Man whole and entire, than to enter into Heaven halt and maimed:

maimed : Yea, the very best Christians do so live in the Flesh, as being too well content that the Flesh should also live, move and act in them ; They will not be so unhospitable to destroy that inmate of Corruption, though that lurk in them only to destroy them.

I shall not now lay Motives and Arguments before you, to press upon you this great Duty ; the Text hath given us the most effectual and brief Compendium : *If ye mortifie, ye shall live ; if not, ye shall die.* Life and Death is this day set before you, and what could be spoken so much, in so little. Certainly that Man may conclude himself to be already dead, whom the Consideration of Life and Death doth not move nor persuade. The fleshly Liver he shall die. Is that all ? Why, do we not see the most mortified Christians die too ? Doth not the original Curse take hold of them both, and tumble them alike into the Dust ? Would not wicked Men be content, would they not wish, after they have been sated and glutted with sinning, to die away, and to lie for ever in a forgotten Darknes ? What then is there in this dying that should be of such force unto Mortification ? The mortified Christian he shall live. Is that all ? What, to live still mortifying, still contending and fighting against his Corruptions, still sighing and groaning under them in the Anguish and Bitterness of his Soul ! Is there any such encouraging Promise in this, that he shall still live struggling and combating against that

that which makes him weary of his Life, and even to long and pant after Death? Are these such prevailing Motives to Mortification? No, the Sensualist shall die, but he shall die a never-dying Life of Death. The mortified Person shall live; but he shall live a Life wherein there shall be no more need of Mortification, because no more remainders of Corruption; then all Tears shall be wiped out of our Eyes, and all Sins wiped out of our Hearts. Now is the time of our Warfare, and every Bat-tel that we fight is with confused Noise, and Garments roll'd in Blood: then shall we for ever triumph and sing an eternal Song of Victory, cloathed in Garments made white with the Blood of the Lamb. Now we are at a perpetual Discord with our selves, Thoughts bandying against Thoughts, Affections against Affections, Will against Will, and all within us in an Uproar and Tumult: But then an eternal Peace and Calm shall fill our Souls; not a Thought shall whisper a Rebellion; the whole Tide and Current of our Wills and Affections with a full and undisturbed Stream shall run into that boundless Ocean of all Felicity, even God himself. But I must (though loath) leave the prosecution of this Argument.

And now let me suppose that the great Question you would all ask is, What you should do to mortifie Corruption, and how you should strive against it so as to obtain Conquest and Victory over it? For Direction therefore in this great Work, let me propound



propound unto you these following Rules, each of which if rightly wielded, is enough to pierce into the very Bowels of Corruption.

*First*, Labour to get a full and clear sight and discovery of that Sin especially which is most perplexing and most unmortified. He that would subdue his Enemy must first find him out, and consider where his Strength lies, what Advantages he hath got against him, the manner of his warring, &c. and accordingly prepare for Resistance. This must be the Policy of every Christian, he must keep Spies and good intelligence in his Enemies Camp. Two things he must especially know if he would subdue his Lusts.

I.  
Help to  
Mortification.

*First*, Wherein their great Strength lies, and what Advantages they have against him.

I.

*Secondly*, He must always consider the Ground and Cause of the Quarrel. As,

2.

*First*, The Guilt which it would bring upon him. And,

I.

*Secondly*, The Danger it would bring him into if committed. This will serve to kindle a holy Anger and Indignation against Sin, without which this great Work of Mortification can never go on prosperously.

2.

*First*, I say, seriously consider wherein the Strength and Prevalency of thy Corruption lies, from whence it hath its greatest Advantage against thee; this will shew thee how thou shouldst particularly apply thy self to the Mortification of it. If it hath

I.

hath more than ordinary Strength and Power in thee, thy Endeavours to mortifie it must also be more than ordinary. If you ask, What are those Advantages that do give so great a Prevalency unto a Corruption? I answer,

- I. *First*, Customariness and frequent Relapses into the same Sins, especially if they have been against strong Convictions, against binding Vows and Promises, and manifold dealings of God both in Judgment and in Mercy. Though I am far from that desperate rabbinical Conceit of the *Jews*, who hold the fourth Relapse into the same Sin unpardonable; grounding themselves upon *Amos 1.* where God threatens *Damascus, Edom and Ammon, that for three transgressions, and for four he would not turn away their punishment.* Yet certainly if a particular Lust, be it what it will, Pride, Malice, Uncleaness, Covetousness, breaks forth frequently into act, forceth all thy Guards, beares down all Considerations that stand in the way to oppose it; I will not say thy case is desperate, but yet 'tis very dangerous, and a sad Symptom of a stubborn unruly Lust that will not be mortified without extraordinary Pains and Care. Dost thou find any such old cankering Distemper within thee, ripened by long Continuance, and habituated by Custom, that hath often choakt Conscience, stifled Convictions, out-stood many dispensations of God? Know that the very Age and grey Hairs of such a Lust claim a Command and Authority over the Soul, and that it is  
a Task

a Task next to an impossibility to subdue it. *Jer. 13. 23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.* 'Tis very hard to dislodge a Lust that pleads Prescription for it self, it hath had Possession of the Heart Time out of Mind; can you ever remember when it had not? and therefore struggles as for its lawful Right, and will not be ejected. And this is by so much the more dangerous, if it breaks out to the defiling and wounding of Conscience, after deep Humiliation, bitter Repentance, serious Resolutions, temporary Reformation; if it prevail against all these, what is there in the Soul that can resist it? Every spiritual Distemper is dangerous, but Relapses are commonly mortal and deadly; and are too clear Evidences, that when the Soul was at its best Estate, its Wound was healed but slightly, only skin'd over, while the Core of Corruption lay deep within, rankling and festring till it break out more incurably.

Now if this be the Case and Condition of any here, 'tis possible that as yet Grace may be still in you, but it is impossible that it should there remain unless you use extraordinary Diligence for the quelling and subduing this unruly Lust that hath so often broken loose.

Now to help you in this (as indeed all helps against a Corruption so deeply rooted are too few) consider these following particulars.

*Helps to mortify carnal and fleshly Sins.*

*First,*



1. *First*, Think with your selves if your Natures be changed, your Customs also must be changed. 'Tis a most loathsome and monstrous Mixture to have a new Nature and yet old Sins. Every Principle will act suitably to it self; if Grace be indeed in you 'twill not lie sluggish and dormant; no, 'tis an active, vigorous and æthereal Being, it will certainly change the Course and Custom of your Lives, it will make strange Innovations, antiquating old Customs, and bringing in new ones. Now urge this against a customary Corruption: How can I think my Nature is changed, if still my Life and Actions be the same? I am not now the Man I was; and 'tis most irrational, that I, regenerate, that I, sanctified and renewed, should observe the Customs and Usages of my self unregenerate, carnal and prophane. And,
2. *Secondly*, Consider that customary and ordinary Sins will call for, either extraordinary Wrath, or at least more than customary Repentance. Certainly redoubled Sins will be punished with more than a single Hell; if they be pardon'd, 'twill cost many a Shower of repentant Tears. *Peter's* thrice denial of his Master makes him weep bitterly.
3. *Thirdly*, Customary Sins carry in them an high Contempt against God himself. To sin through surprisal, inadvertency, or infirmity is incident to all Men, but to sin the same Sin frequently, to make a custom of it, must needs argue that such a one slighteth and despiseth God himself, he would  
else

else fear to provoke him the second time by the same Sin. And,

*Fourthly*, Consider Custom in sinning is the ready way to final Hardness and Impenitency. 'Tis this that turns the Heart to Iron, and the Brow to Brass; makes Men resolved to Sin, and impudent in sinning. 'Tis this that Hoodwinks the Understanding, blunts the Edge of the sharpest Convictions, seares the Conscience, and brings a thick insensibleness upon that tender Faculty: This makes the grossest and vilest Wickedness familiar to the Soul, so that many times Sins of the horridest and blackest Guilt are rush'd into without either Fear or Regard. And,

4.

*Fifthly*, And Lastly, Custom in Sin will grow to a nature of sinning, if not timely prevented by a severe Mortification. It will so insinuate into the Affections, and wind and twist it self about every Faculty of the Soul, that what at first was but Use, will in process become Nature. You see then what a great necessity there is mightily to labour and strive against these customary Sins, which are as a twisted Cord very hardly broken. If a Corruption hath once settled into a Custom, 'tis not an ordinary Endeavour that can then remove it. That's the first thing.

5.

*Secondly*, As a customary, so a peculiar Sin requires a peculiar Mortification. 'Tis in vain to use common and ordinary Attempts against a proper Sin. And therefore David doth exult and glory in this as a great Atchievement, *Psal. 18. 23. I kept my*

2.

*my self from mine Iniquity:* Mine Iniquity; not mine by Election or Approbation, as one pickt out from the rest to reserve for himself; no, but mine by a too constant and violent Bent and Inclination of my corrupt Heart.

Now certain it is that every one hath his peculiar Sin, a Sin that he may truly call his own, that is faster rivetted and deeper rooted; yea, deeper rooted in his Soul than others are. I shall not now enquire whether these proper and peculiar Sins arise, either from the Crasis and Temper of the Body, or from a Man's Education, or from his Profession and Calling; whencesoever they proceed, if we would go on vigorously in the Work of Mortification; these are the Sins we must especially single out and deal against. Yea, but you will say, how shall I know which is my peculiar Sin, that so I may set my self against it to mortifie it?

To this I answer, Were it as easie to subdue it as it is to discover it, a great part of the Difficulty of Christianity would soon be at an end. It is a Sin cannot long lie hid, 'twill betray it self, if not to the observation of others, yet at least to the observation of a Man's own Conscience. If Conscience should ask you one by one, what is thine, and thine, and thine Iniquity? Every one would silently whisper to himself, oh! Pride is mine, Hypocrisie is mine, Covetousness and Worldliness is mine, Uncleanness is mine; and who among us is there that could not give an answer?



answer? Yet for farther Satisfaction, take these particulars.

*First*, That Sin that doth most of all employ and busie thy Thoughts, that's thy most unmortified and peculiar Sin. Thoughts are Purveyors for Lust, that range abroad and bring in Provision for it. Observe now upon what Objects they pitch, mark how they work: Do thy Thoughts lie continually sucking at the Breasts of Pleasure? Are they still drencht and bath'd in carnal Delights? Voluptuousness is thy peculiar Sin. Do thy Thoughts continually delve and dig in the Earth, and return to thee laden only with thick Clay? Covetousness is thy peculiar Sin. Do they soar and tower up to Honours, Dignities, Preferments, and still fill thee with Designs and Forecasts how to raise thy self to them? Pride and Ambition are thy Sins. And so of the rest.

1.

*That is our peculiar Sin that takes up most of our Thoughts.*

*Secondly*, The unmortified and peculiar Sin is always most impatient of Contradiction and Opposition.

2.

*First*, It cannot bear a Reproof from others. Let never so much be thundred against other Sins, this makes no Stir nor Tumult; but if the Reproof fall upon his Sin, you then touch the very Apple of his Eye, you then search him to the very Quick; and this will cause some Commotion and Disturbance within. Hence it is that many who come to the Word of God, sit very quiet under many a Reproof, and many a Threatning, because they think these all fall besides them: But if the

1.

H

Bow

Bow drawn at a venture wound them under the fifth Rib, if it strike their peculiar Sin; oh! what mustering up of carnal Reasonings, and carnal Evasions is there to shift it off. All this Stir and Bustle doth but plainly shew where the Sore is: That's a galled Conscience that will not endure to be wrung by a Reproof. And,

2. *Secondly*, As it cannot bear a Reproof, so it cannot brook a Denial when it tempts and solicites. Of all Lusts this tempts oft-nest and most eagerly; other Corruptions are modest compared to this, and will often desist upon a peremptory Denial; but this peculiar Sin grows wild and outrageous, it will have its Course, or the Soul shall have no quiet; so that Conscience is never harder put to it, than to stand it out against the Importunity of this Sin. That's the second thing.

3. *Thirdly*, That Corruption which every little Occasion stirs up and sets on work with more than a proportionable Violence, that is the most unmortified and peculiar Sin. By more than a proportionable Violence, I mean, when the Object, Temptation or Occasion is but slight and inconsiderable, and yet the Lust that is thereby moved acts strongly and impetuously. And therefore the Apostle *Heb. 12. 1.* Calls it *the Sin that doth so easily beset us.* It stands always ready and prepared upon the least hint of a Temptation to assault us,

Now look what Corruption it is that doth most frequently interpose, that every little Occasion stirs up and inflames to

a great

a greater height and rage, than a strong Temptation would another; be it Passion, be it Pride, or any other, this is the most unmortified and peculiar Sin.

These may suffice, though others may be added, to discover what is our proper and peculiar Sin, the Lust that is most natural and congenial to us. Now since these Sins have such a great Advantage against us more than others have, they must therefore be more especially opposed than others. *This kind* (to use our Saviour's Words) *goes not forth but by Fasting and Prayer*, and of the most earnest Endeavours of that Soul who is deeply afflicted with their Power and Prevalency in him. I shall only here offer two or three Considerations that may possibly prove subservient to the mortifying of these peculiar Sins.

*Helps for  
the mortifying  
of our  
peculiar  
Sins.*

*First*, Consider it is no excuse or extenuation of thy Sin, nor do thou look upon it as so, that it is natural to thee, that it is the Sin of thy Temper, Complexion, Profession; but rather account this an heinous Aggravation, that makes thy Sin out of measure sinful. Some are so absurdly Prophane as to make the naturalness of a Sin an Argument to lessen the Guilt of it; they are naturally passionate and peevish, naturally high-minded and ambitious, naturally voluptuous and sensual, and they cannot help it; 'tis fixed and rooted in their Temper and Constitution of Body; and therefore it's no wonder if it sometimes breaks forth in their Lives, unless they



could put off the outward Man as well as the old Man. Is this thinkest thou an excuse? tell me, is not a Toad therefore more loathsome and ugly, because its very Nature and Temper is Venomous? And dost thou think it a good excuse for thy Sins that thou art naturally subject to them? Thou art therefore more loathsome in the sight of God, whose infinite Holiness stands at as great an Antipathy to a corrupt Nature as to a sinful Life. And therefore we find *David, Psal. 51. 5.* aggravating his actual Sins from this Consideration, *That he was shapen in Iniquity, and conceived in Sin.* Certainly original Sin is no excuse, but rather an aggravation of actual; and the violent propensions of a Man's Nature to one Sin more than another, is but an especial expression of original Corruption.

2. *Secondly,* Avoid especially those Occasions of Sin that have an especial tendency in them to draw forth thy peculiar Lust. This as it must be observed in the Mortification of every Sin, so must it be most carefully heeded in thy dealing against thy proper Sin; because it will take Advantage from every slight and trivial Occasion to break forth and shew it self in act; it watcheth all Opportunities, and a very little Spark will suffice to kindle this Tinder. Thou complaineest thou canst not subdue such a Corruption, it will rise and tumultuate in thee, it will still break from thee; why, canst thou ever expect it will be otherwise while thou heedlessly exposhest thy self to so

so many Occasions on which thy Corruption will take hold? Oh! how easie and comfortable might Christians make this great Work of Mortification if they would herein be watchful. Corruption would not stir, or if it doth, might soon be quelled, did not you your selves entice it out by giving it such fair Opportunities to exert it self. What saith the wise Man, *Prov. 6. 27. Can a Man take fire into his bosom, and his cloths not be burnt?* No, 'tis impossible: yet truly 'tis as possible for a Man that carries the prepared Fewel of Corruption in his Heart, not to have it kindled and inflamed by his venturous running into Occasions of sinning. You do but hereby provoke and dare Corruption, which alas! is too apt to stir of it self. Certainly he that will venture on a near Occasion of sinning, will venture on the Sin it self; and if he be all his days vexed and perplexed by it, 'tis the fault of his own carelessness.

*Thirdly*, Consider this, that proper and peculiar Sins do deserve and call for proper and peculiar Punishments. Why shouldst thou think while any unmortified Lust is thine own, the Punishment of it should not be thine own also? Is it reason that the Sin should be peculiarly thine, and yet the Punishment of it Christ's? No, Christ never came into the World to take off the Guilt of that Sin by Justification, from which he doth not in some measure take off the Bent and Propension of the Heart by Sanctification. And,

H 3

*Lastly*,

4. *Lastly*, Consider if you are Saints, you your selves are not your own, and shall any Sin then be your peculiar Sin. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. *You are not your own, but you are bought with a price: wherefore glorifie God in your Bodies, and in your Spirits which are God's.* And shall we our selves be God's, and yet any Sin be ours? What is this less than by a kind of practical Blasphemy, to make our Sins God's also? Such like Considerations as these are, should be continually present with us, when we go forth against our proper Sins. It is not ordinary Endeavours that will suffice to mortifie these, they are so rooted in and interwoven with the very Principles of our Nature, that they are the very last Sins that will quit their hold, and that not without much difficulty and hardship. Thus I have done with the first Branch of this Direction, to take notice of those Sins which have the greatest Advantage and Prevalency against us, which are customary and peculiar Sins; and have given you some particulars to help you in the mortifying of them.

2. *Branch.* *Secondly*, The other Branch of this Direction is, to be continually pondering and weighing the Ground and Cause of the Quarrel. This will exceedingly animate your utmost Endeavours unto Mortification. 'Tis the Cause that inspirits Soldiers: Tell them that they are to fight for Estates, Liberties and Lives, that whatever is dear to them is laid at Stake, and pawn'd upon their Valour; this will sharpen their Cou-



Courage, yea and their Swords too, and make every stroke laid on by such Considerations fatal as Death. What can be more effectually prest upon the spiritual Soldier to heighten and inflame his Courage? Tell him but the Cause he engageth for, and he must be either very much a Coward, or else very treacherous against his own Soul, that doth not resolve to stand it out to the utmost; 'tis for an everlasting Kingdom, a Crown of Glory, a precious and immortal Soul, for eternal Life, for God himself, you are to fight for; and will you sit still and see all these lost and taken from you? There's not a Corruption or Temptation that assaults you, but seeks to deprive you of Heaven and Happiness; and would spill the dearest Blood of your Souls. A Christian's All, his nearest Soul, his dearest God, the rich and unconceivable Glory promised him, the few precious Graces bestowed on him to bear his charges till he hath attained it, are all here staked down; this is the Prize you are to contend for: If you can suffer all these to be taken from you, and think them not worth the striving for, you are beyond the reach of a Provocation. Let the Devil and your own Lusts come armed against you with all the Strength and Rage of Hell; yet if you can but then keep up lively and distinct Considerations of the vast and important Concernment that depends upon the issue of the Conflict, it is impossible they should ever prevail upon you to the Commission of any delibe-

rate Sin. Whenever therefore you are tempted, and find unmortified Corruption very violent, think seriously with your selves what it is you are solicited to do; is it not to provoke your God, to betray your selves? Is it not to defile, nay to ~~defile~~ your Souls? Now Sin and Satan are very earnest to have me run my self into Perdition; fain they would persuade me to forfeit Heaven, and plunge my self deep into Hell; they entice, they impel, they swell and tumultuate; but if I yield, what becomes of all my Hopes, of my Crown of Happiness, and of my own Soul? 'Tis Happiness is the Quarrel, and shall that be less dear to me than my Destruction is to Satan! Hath he cause to be so active and violent for my Ruin, and have I no cause to be industrious and vigilant for my Salvation? Shall I sell away all the great and glorious Things of Eternity, at the cheap and low Price of a momentary Sin? Do but actually ponder and weigh these Considerations when a Corruption moves and acts in you, set them before you; say them to your selves, and run them over in your Thoughts; and let me be bold to say, Sin then if you can. There are two Considerations especially that will be of mighty Influence to the suppressing of a Corruption while it is tempting and stirring, and are the most available Helps to Mortification of all other.

1. *First*, A serious Consideration of the great Guilt that Sin will bring upon us.

It

It must be the very first Work of that Christian who will successfully attempt the Work of Mortification, to charge a prevailing Lust home with the full Guilt of it. I confess it is a ghastly Sight, a Spectacle full of dread and horror to view Sin in its proper Colours; but it is far better for thee to look Sin in the face when it tempts, than for Sin to stare thy Conscience in the face when it terrifies. Carry always about you those true Glasses both of the Law and Gospel, that may represent Sin aright to you. When a glossing flattering Temptation shews it fair and beautiful, look upon your Sin, see whether it can hold up its face against the Law, when the Sovereignty, Holiness, Severity, and piercing Power and Energy of it come all in against it. *By the Law*, says the Apostle, *is the Knowledge of Sin*, Rom. 3. 20. Awe thy Conscience with the Authority of God stamp and imprinted upon his Law. Hath God the great Sovereign forbidden this by a Law, and shall not I strive against it? Not to fight against this Sin were to be found a fighter against God. Provoke thy self against it from the Holiness of God revealed in his Law? Shall I commit that which for its Deformity and Uglinefs an Holy God hath forbidden in an Holy Law. The Law hath in it,

*First*, Such a bright and clear Light that Sin cannot escape the discovery of it, it will make every spot in the Soul visible; and those Sins which through those false Lights

1.



Lights that Satan sets up appear comely and well-featured, when the Light of the Law shines into the Conscience will then appear but one great mishapen Blot. And,

2. *Secondly*, It hath in it such an absolute Command and Authority, that Sin cannot resist nor escape the Power of it. It comes into the Conscience in the Name of God, and makes as great a trembling in the Heart, when set home in the condemning Power of it; as it did in the *Israelites* when delivered in that dreadful Pomp from Mount *Sinai*. Now is this holy, close, searching, authoritative Law to be broken, think you, at the Will and Pleasure of every Temptation? Must we in every Passion (with *Moses*) at every corrupt Motion and sinful Inclination break these two Tables in pieces? Nay indeed, is it possible that while in a Temptation you are applying the Law, you should then break it? No, certainly that Man is near to a most desperate Hardness, who while he is looking upon the Holiness, Authority and Divinity of the Law, while he is letting in the convincing Light of it to discover the Guilt of Sin unto him, while he is discharging the dreadful Threatnings of it against his Sin, yet can then commit it; I say, he is near unto a final judicial Hardness.

When you have now a while contemplated the face of Sin in the Law, remove it to the Gospel. If the Law break the Heart with Terrour, the Gospel will melt it with Love. What! to Sin not only against the Authority of a God, but also against the

Love

Love of a Father; that Parent Love, from which proceeds all the good I enjoy or expect; that pardoning Love, justifying, adopting, and saving Love! Can I spurn against those Bowels that yern and roll towards me? Can I sin against that Grace and Mercy, which should I sin against, would yet still tender me a Pardon? Can I be prodigal and lavishing of that Blood of which Christ was so free himself? Shall I despise it or trample it under Foot, because it flows in so full a stream? Shall I quench and sadden the Holy Comforter, and return him Grief for all the ravishing Consolations I have been filled with from him? Is this the filial Disposition, the Child-like Ingenuity of a Son, of a Saint? These, O Christian, are Considerations that must needs silence the most importunate Corruptions and Temptations, that they shall have nothing more to mutter. It is the Gospel by which alone the Guilt of Sin is taken away, that doth thus aggravate that Guilt to such an excess as proves a security from the committing of it. Tell me, did you ever know a Temptation prevail over you? Did you ever commit a Sin in your whole Lives, while such Considerations as these were fresh and vigorous upon your Hearts? Nay, I know it is impossible: the Grace of God teacheth us otherwise; yea, it not only teacheth us, but inforceth and constrains us otherwise. A Temptation must first thrust these Considerations out of the Heart e'er it can prevail.

This

Lights that Satan sets up appear comely and well-featured, when the Light of the Law shines into the Conscience will then appear but one great mishapen Blot. And,

2. *Secondly*, It hath in it such an absolute Command and Authority, that Sin cannot resist nor escape the Power of it. It comes into the Conscience in the Name of God, and makes as great a trembling in the Heart, when set home in the condemning Power of it; as it did in the *Israelites* when delivered in that dreadful Pomp from Mount *Sinai*. Now is this holy, close, searching, authoritative Law to be broken, think you, at the Will and Pleasure of every Temptation? Must we in every Passion (with *Moses*) at every corrupt Motion and sinful Inclination break these two Tables in pieces? Nay indeed, is it possible that while in a Temptation you are applying the Law, you should then break it? No, certainly that Man is near to a most desperate Hardness, who while he is looking upon the Holiness, Authority and Divinity of the Law, while he is letting in the convincing Light of it to discover the Guilt of Sin unto him, while he is discharging the dreadful Threatnings of it against his Sin, yet can then commit it; I say, he is near unto a final judicial Hardness.

When you have now a while contemplated the face of Sin in the Law, remove it to the Gospel. If the Law break the Heart with Terrour, the Gospel will melt it with Love. What! to Sin not only against the Authority of a God, but also against the

Love



Love of a Father, that Parent Love, from which proceeds all the good I enjoy or expect; that pardoning Love, justifying, adopting, and saving Love! Can I spurn against those Bowels that yern and roll towards me? Can I sin against that Grace and Mercy, which should I sin against, would yet still tender me a Pardon? Can I be prodigal and lavishing of that Blood of which Christ was so free himself? Shall I despise it or trample it under Foot, because it flows in so full a stream? Shall I quench and sadden the Holy Comforter, and return him Grief for all the ravishing Consolations I have been filled with from him? Is this the filial Disposition, the Child-like Ingenuity of a Son, of a Saint? These, O Christian, are Considerations that must needs silence the most importunate Corruptions and Temptations, that they shall have nothing more to mutter. It is the Gospel by which alone the Guilt of Sin is taken away, that doth thus aggravate that Guilt to such an excess as proves a security from the committing of it. Tell me, did you ever know a Temptation prevail over you? Did you ever commit a Sin in your whole Lives, while such Considerations as these were fresh and vigorous upon your Hearts? Nay, I know it is impossible: the Grace of God teacheth us otherwise; yea, it not only teacheth us, but inforceth and constrains us otherwise. A Temptation must first thrust these Considerations out of the Heart e'er it can prevail.

This

This therefore is the first means of beating down a Corruption by the Consideration of its Guilt, comparing it both with the Law and Gospel. What better Weapon can we have to fight against Corruption with, than *the sword of the Spirit*, which, *Eph. 6. 17.* the Apostle tells us, is *the word of God*: And *Heb. 4. 12.* he tells us, *this word is a two-edged sword*; the Law is one edge and the Gospel another; and both these are powerful, sharp and piercing, to the suppressing and mortifying of Corruption, going to the very Inwards and Heart thereof.

2. *Secondly*, Another thing that hath great Influence to the mortifying of Sin is, a serious Consideration of the great Danger it will bring us into. It were sad and dreadful, and enough to cause a trembling in us, if I should only mention unto you the Danger of an enraged and distracted Conscience, which God may let loose upon you in all its Horrors and Affrights, when you let loose your selves unto the Commission of any known Sin; the Danger if not of an enraged Conscience, yet of a feared Conscience, which is worse; the Danger of a judiciary Curse and Tradition to be delivered up unto, and sealed under Sin; that no Reproofs, nor Convictions, nor Judgments, nor Mercies should ever more take hold, or make any impression upon you. If I should name no more, were not here enough to stop the Course of a prevailing Lust? If yet you have any Tenderness left in your Hearts, any Sense remain.

remaining in your Conscience, together with their Peace; Had you rather hazard the loss of these, than not gratifie a Corruption? Say to it, What Sin is there can bring me in so much Delight in the Commission of it, as God may pour in Terrors afterwards? May not God make my Conscience a Hell incarnate, and empty the Vials of his Wrath into this Vessel, whilst it is yet an earthly Vessel? And shall I ever let a Hell break into my Soul, by letting a Lust break forth? Urge against a Temptation that irrefragable Argument which all the Methods and Sophisms of the old Serpent shall never be able to dissolve to all Eternity. If I yield, either my Conscience will be sensible of the Sin, or not: If it be sensible, What is there in the Sin that can recompence this Trouble of Conscience? If it be not sensible, What is there in this Sin that can recompence the Stupidity and Deadness of Conscience? Still either way the Danger is so great, that the Devil hath scarce impudence enough importunately to urge a Temptation upon that Soul, who shall urge this Consideration upon it self. But besides these there is,

*Thirdly,* Another Danger, and that indeed which swallows up all the rest, and that is the Danger of eternal Damnation. I have before shewed you how such a Legal Consideration as this is, may be, and is a fit means for Mortification. Now bring and marshal even this against your Lusts. Think you that a Temptation can out-face  
Hell



Hell it self, and dare everlasting burnings? Can it stand before a torrent of Fire and Brimstone? No, certainly this is the hardness and obdurateness of those only who feel Hell's Torments, not to be deterred from Sin for fear of them. Now rise up mightily against thy Lusts even from this Consideration, shew them what they deserve; no less than Damnation; from which, if any who give way to them at any time, are rescued, it is only by the Sovereign and unaccountable Mercy of God: And thus while Satan casts Fire, do thou cast Firebrands. This is to make Hell his second Torture, that as God makes use of it for his Punishment, so thou for his Defeat and Disappointment.

Now for the right managing of this Direction (for indeed much Care and Circumspection must here be had) take these following particulars.

- I. *First*, Take heed, lest through any deceitfulness of thy Heart thou excusest and lessenest thy Sin, when thou shouldst be dealing against it by a vigorous Mortification. To take off any thing from your Apprehensions of the Guilt of Sin, is to add to the Power and Strength of the Temptation. And therefore take it for a sure Rule, that that Sin in which thou dost not now see that black and horrid Guilt which formerly thou hast done, hath more Power over thee, and is more unmortified in thee, than ever formerly it was.

It is the common Method of Satan in the height and fury of a Temptation, to persuade

persuade the Heart, either that it is no Sin, or else a small and venial one. If this Deceit prevail and take place, the Work of Mortification can never go on vigorously. Certain it is, that where the Guilt of any Sin is apprehended but small, there the Endeavours against it will be but weak. And,

*Secondly*, Beware of weakning and enervating Arguments drawn from the Desert and Danger of a prevailing Lust, by relieving thy self with Thoughts of the Goodness and Safety of thy spiritual Condition. This is a most desperate Deceit of the Heart, and a ready way to undo thousands of Souls. Have you never found, that when you have made head against a Temptation by Arguments drawn from the Wrath of God due to it, and that eternal Vengeance that will follow? Have you never found your corrupt Hearts replying upon you, Yea, but I am delivered from the Wrath to come, I am ransomed from that Vengeance, my spiritual and eternal State is secured by the immutable Promise of God, and the immortal Seed of Grace; and therefore though I do commit this Sin, yet my Soul shall live? This is the common Fallacy of the Devil, thus to make presumptuous Applications of Mercy, Pardon and free Grace, to patronize the Allowance of Sin. If you thus argue, certain it is you can never make good Work of Mortification. 'Tis impossible to persuade that Man from Sin by the Terrours of the Lord, who looks upon  
what-

2.

whatsoever is spoken of that kind, as not appertaining to him. And therefore consider,

1. *First*, To encourage thy self in Sin upon hopes of thy being in a State of Grace, is so rotten and unworthy a Principle, as is scarce consistent with Grace. What is this but to make use of Grace against it self, against the God of Grace, a meer turning of it into Wantonness, and sinning that it might abound? Which of all things in the World is the most opposite and repugnant to the truly noble and ingenuous Nature of a gracious Heart. And,

2. *Secondly*, Consider, If thou shouldst be in a State of Grace, and stand accepted with God, yet thou canst never know thy self so to be; nay, thou hast all the Reason in the World to judge the contrary, if this Consideration embolden thee to sin. What though the perseverance of the Saints unto Glory be certain, yet are they to persevere thereunto whatsoever Sins they commit? We find no such Promise in the whole Tenour of the Covenant. It is therefore more unreasonable and absurd to conclude from thy Grace that thou mayst sin without danger; than to conclude; because thou makest use of such an Encouragement to sin, therefore thou hast no Grace. And,

3. *Thirdly*, Though thou knowest thy self, by the highest pitch of Assurance attainable, to be delivered from the Wrath to come, yet still this Wrath is the due Desert



fert of thy Sin; yea, and will be the certain Punishment of it unless it be mortified in thee. If ye, ye Elect, ye sanctified and justified ones, *if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die.* We may and ought therefore to denounce Death and Hell, to the most assured Saint, if he doth not mortifie: for though God hath decreed to save all his Elect, yet he never decreed to save any of them but through Mortification. The Vanity of those Men is in these our days sufficiently discovered, who would not have Believers take notice, nor make application to themselves of any thing that sounds threatening and terrible in the Scripture, as being unfutable to their free and evangelical Spirit. Let such know that in letting go such harsh and severe Considerations, they lose a great Advantage which they might have against their Lusts. The Holiest on Earth, when God threatens Sin, ought to tremble; and whatsoever Judgment they pass upon their Persons, though they know themselves to be Regenerate and Elect, yet this is the Judgment they ought to pass upon their Actions, that if they be sinful they are also damnable.

So that whatever thy Condition be, yet whenever Corruption tempts and troubles thee, oppose against its Prevalency and Seduction these affrighting Considerations of Wrath, Hell, and Vengeance: Thus follow and plie it, thus heap Coals of Fire upon its Head; throw a Hell between thee and thy Lusts; this, if any thing will, stop thee: but if thou canst frequently wade  
I through

through these unto it, if thou canst commit it even while the Thoughts of future Wrath are hot and scorching, while everlasting burnings are flaming and flashing about thee; this argues a wretched Obstinacy in Sin, and is the sad Symptom of a most dangerous, if not desperate Condition. And thus I have done with the first Direction unto Mortification. We must be well acquainted, and have a through insight into our Sins; both to know whence they have their great Strength, and also to know what the great Guilt and Danger of them is.

2. *Resolution* *very helpful* *for the mortifying of Sin.* *Secondly,* Another Direction, in brief shall be this: If you would effectually mortifie Corruption, then arm your selves against it with strong Resolutions, with Resolutions free from Limitations, free from any secret Reservations. The Apostle hath given us many a tried piece of Christian Armour, *Eph. 6.* There we have *the Shield of Faith, the Sword of the Spirit, the Breastplate of Righteousness, the Helmet of Salvation,* and a compleat Panoply: But what are these, without Resolution to use them? The Shield may rust against the Wall, and the Sword in the Sheath; Grace may lie sluggish and unactive in the Soul, while Lust tempts, seduceth and captivates, unless holy Resolution rouse it, arm it, and lead it forth to the Conflict. Wherefore is it that so many complain their Lusts and Corruptions are invincible, that they cannot stand before them? What's the Reason they are so often insnared and so often captivated,

but

but because they do not put on the Resolutions of Men nor Christians? They are not resolved to conquer; they do not fortifie nor steel their Hearts with absolute and peremptory Resolves, that notwithstanding all the Advantages any Corruption hath gained against them, though it hath already frequently prevailed over them, though it daily and hourly tempt, entice, impel, yet they will beat it down and trample on it. Men are not thus firmly resolv'd, but waver and stagger in their Purposes; and thereby give Satan Hope and Encouragement while they thus fluctuate to assault and prevail over them. Were they once fully resolved, they would not yield; and Satan who can do nothing against them without their own Consent, would have but small Encouragement to continue tempting; he would then say, it is in vain to lay siege to that Soul, his Resolutions have fortified him and made him impregnable; not a fiery Dart will stick, but rebounds back as from a Rock of Adamant, and makes no impressions; he is grown obstinate against my Temptations, and will hearken to none of my Suggestions; he will not stand so much as to consider what a Temptation can say for it self, but peremptorily refuseth and rejecteth all; there's no hope left for me to prevail with such a Soul. What David saith of his Enemies, *Psal. 118. 10, 11. All Nations compassed me about; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them: They compassed me about, yea, they compassed me*  
↓ 2 about;



*about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.* The same must we say concerning our Corruptions; though they beset us round and compass us about, though they swarm about us like Bees; yet in the Name of the Lord, in the Aid and Assistance of the Holy Spirit, we will destroy them. You know what particular Corruption it is that doth most of all perplex and prevail over you; now take up fixed Resolutions for the mortifying of that Sin. Oh! never more will I give way to such a Temptation; never more will I hearken to the Flatteries and Enticements of such a Lust; never more shall this break my Peace, wound my Conscience, displease my God: now will I be revenged on it, and pour out the Heart Blood of it before the Lord. Such absolute Resolutions will be of great Influence in the Work of Mortification. Yea, and though it may seem to be an old fashion'd antiquated Prescript, yet would it approve it self to be of singular Use and Advantage if we strengthened such Resolutions against Sin by laying upon our selves some binding Vows and Engagements against them. See how strongly David binds himself by an Oath, *Psal. 119. 106. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.* David was resolved to keep the Law of God; but lest that Resolution should prove too weak, he strengthens it with an Oath, *I have sworn that I will keep them*; yea, and as if this Oath were not security enough, he backs it with another

ther Resolution; *I have sworn, and I will perform it.* So do thou against thy Sins, resolve and vow against them, enforce one by the other. Lift up thy Hands unto God, that in the Strength of Christ and the Aid of the Spirit, thou wilt never more yield to such a Temptation, give way to such a Corruption, commit such a Sin. This, were it more practised among Christians, would mightily promote the great Work of Mortification.

But you will say, What Benefit can there be in this? Alas! my Corruptions are so violent and outrageous, that they break through far greater Engagements than my own Resolutions are; neither Law nor Gospel can oppose them, they rush through Commands, Admonitions, Threatnings, Promises, and set all at nought; and shall I think then that such weak and insignificant things as Purposes and Resolutions are of any Moment? *Objection.*

Be it so, that the rage of thy Lusts hath broken through all those greater Engagements, and hath born down before it whatsoever either Law or Gospel should say to the contrary, yet now bring against it thy Purposes and Resolutions; though there may be and is an Obligation of greater Authority from other Considerations, yet nothing carries in it an Obligation of greater Efficacy than these do. There is that Temper in every Man's Nature, that though he struggle against an Engagement that the Authority of another imposeth on him, yet he looks upon a voluntary Engagement. *Answer.*

gement that he imposeth on himself, as most binding, sacred, and inviolable. Certainly did you but thus bind your selves, and in a serious manner call God to witness and assist your Resolutions, you would find that those Corruptions which have broken through all other Considerations would have a stop put to them by this.

2.  
*Resisting  
the first Mo-  
tions of Sin  
a great help  
unto Morti-  
fication.*

*Thirdly*, Another Direction is this, Resist strongly the first Motions and first Risings of thy Corruptions; crush them while they are in their Infancy, before they get to a Head, and gather Strength against thee. It is Folly to stay till thy Enemies are grown up: No, take the Offspring and Progeny of Lust, while they are little, and deal with them as God threatens *Babel, dash these little ones against the stones.* Consider,

1.

*First*, That there is not the least and most inconsiderable sinful Motion, that riseth in thy Soul, but it tends to the very utmost Guilt, that that kind of Sin is capable of. Thou art deceived if thou thinkest it will still be a weak, faint, languishing Conception: No, Corruption will lay in Provision for it and nourish it, till that which was at first but as a Grain of Mustard Seed, the smallest of all Seeds, grow up and shoot forth great Branches, that the Prince of the Air may lodge in them. Thou mayst easier set bounds to the flowing of the Sea, and in a Tempest command a Wave in the midst of its swelling to stand fixt and not break, than to stop the Course of a growing Lust; and to say to it,



it, hitherto only shalt thou come and no farther; as far as Thoughts, as far as Delight and Complacency, but never so far as Act; 'tis impossible. The Cloud that at first was but an Hand's breadth, soon grew into a general Tempest. Truly a Lust that at first seems no more, will, if not presently scattered, soon raise a Storm and Tempest in the Soul, and what Assurance-Office will then secure him from making Shipwreck of a good Conscience. These small and beginning Lusts, though they may seem harmless and innocent, yet if let alone, will stop no where short of the highest pitch of Wickedness, and the lowest place of Hell. An irreverend Thought of God, it would stop no where short of profest Atheism and flat denying of God. An hard Thought against the People and the Ways of God, would stop no where short of implacable Hatred and bloody Persecution. An envious malicious Thought would run and feed up into Murther. Ask these Thoughts therefore whither it is they tend; what Period, what Issue they would have? Would they not end in Blasphemy, in Atheism, in Uncleaness, in Oppression, in Murther, in the foulest and most unnatural Sins imaginable? Nay, there is no such little sinful Thought, but that it would, if permitted, end in that unpardonable Sin, the Sin against the Holy Ghost. And therefore with the same Indignation and Abhorrence that you would raise against explicate and down-right Temptations to these Sins, with the very same Indignation and Ab-

horrency rise also against the very first Stirrings and Motions of thy Corruptions; look upon them as if they would accomplish their very utmost Effect, as if they were ready to bring upon thee all that Guilt which they feminally contain in them. And this will be a good means to Mortification.

2. *Secondly*, Consider, thus to oppose the very first Risings of Corruption, will make the Work of Mortification more easy and delightful. It is hard and difficult to purge out the Dregs of a Corruption, that hath lain long settling in the Heart. It will by continuance wind it self into the Affections, bribe and intangle them; and this will make the Work not only more difficult, but more irksome and grievous. The farther the Stream runs from the Fountain, the stronger, the more rapid and irresistible is its Course. So truly is it with Lust; that which at first was but the weak Bubbling up of Corruption, easily opposed and withstood, if it run along in the Heart undisturbed, will swell to such a Torrent, as nothing can stand against it. Every Corruption hath a corroding Malignity, and though at first the Wound appear but slight, yet, if neglected, will bring the Soul into the same sad Condition that David was in, when he cried out, *Psal. 38. 5. My wounds stink and are corrupt, by reason of my foolishness.* Oh! it is indeed a foolishness that will cost us bitter Repentance to dandle sinful Thoughts to trifle and dally it with sinful Me-

tions

tions and sinful Desires; though they are but the first breathings of Corruption, the first sproutings and buddings forth of the Root of Bitterness. Though now we see no such great Guilt nor Danger in them, yet when these shall have exulcerated the whole Soul, and made it all over one running Issue of Corruption; we shall then sadly complain of our gross Folly, in slighting the first workings and stirrings of it. Well then as ever you would make good Work of Mortification, watch carefully against these and suppress them; observe where a sinful Thought, where a sinful Desire doth but begin to heave and lift in thy Heart, and beat it down while it is yet an Embryo and an unshap'd Birth.

*Fourthly*, Another Direction shall be this; Set before you, and continually keep alive all those Considerations that may encourage your Hearts, and strengthen your Hands in the carrying on of this great Work. Many such Encouragements might be propounded. As,

4.  
Direction  
unto Morti-  
fication.

*First*, Always keep alive a Sense of God's Presence with you, that he eyes and beholds you; this Apprehension, if continually kept up in its Life and Vigour, will have a mighty Influence into the Work of Mortification. Consider.

I.

*First*, God eyes thee to observe thee how thou managest thy great Quarrel against Corruption. As soon as thou becamest a Christian thou becamest a Champion; thou entrest into the List, and threwest out a bold Challenge and Defiance to all the Pow-

I.

ers



ers of Hell, and the Lusts of thine own Heart. Not only Men and Angels, but God himself also looks on to see how thou wilt make good the Combat : And wilt not thou strive and struggle to the utmost, when God himself is a Spectatour ? Wilt thou not shew thy Skill and thy Courage, and thy Resolution then ? Nay consider, God is not only a Spectatour, but is deeply concern'd in the Issue of the Combat : They are his Battels thou fightest, his Cause thou maintainest, and if thou art conquer'd and captivated, he is dishonoured as well as thou endangered : If thou art victorious, God the Father hath the Glory of the Efficacy of electing Grace ; Jesus Christ the Captain of our Salvation hath the Glory of the Efficacy of redeeming Grace, and the Holy Spirit hath the Glory of the Efficacy of his sanctifying and strengthening Grace ; all which, are as it were engaged and pawn'd upon thy Mortification. Do but therefore think with your selves when a Temptation assaults you ; now God eyes me to see how I will behave my self against this Temptation, he eyes me to crown me, if Victorious ; and shall I be any otherwise but Victorious while God looks on ? Shall I suffer my self to be foyl'd in his fight, whose Cause I now maintain ? No, God him self shall now see what himself hath given me Power and Ability to do. Did Christians thus consider the Presence and Eye of God with and upon them, they would go forth more resolutely unto the Work of Mortification.

2.

*Secondly, Consider the Eye of Jesus Christ*

is upon thee, not only to observe but to relieve thee, and to pity thee, while thou wrestlest not only against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities and Powers here on Earth, he in Heaven pities thee, his Compassions roll towards thee, he hath a Fellow-feeling of thy Miseries and Infirmities. It is a most comfortable place, *Heb. 4. 15. We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without Sin.* And that other place, *Heb. 2. 18. In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted,* Oh what abundant Comfort may we draw from these two Breasts of Consolation! Alas! a poor Christian, whom Corruption within disquiets, and Temptations without buffet; who is so close beset as to be at the very point of yielding; let him look upwards, and eye that Christ by Faith, who eyes him with Compassion. Thou thinkest thy self deserted and left to break through the Hosts of thy spiritual Enemies as thou canst, none to own thee, none to stand by thee; oh yes! Jesus Christ stands by thee, he knows thy weakness, he sees the Power of thy Lusts, in all Temptations he is tempted; and he who knows no Corruption in himself, yet feels the stirrings and the strong workings of Corruption in the Hearts of his, and he will succour and relieve them.

Now what an Encouragement is this. Is there any Soul that would refuse to war-against his Corruptions under such a Leader

der and Captain, who gives not only a Command to fight, but Might to subdue; who not only looks on the Agonies and Conflicts of his with Compassion, but relieves and succours them with Power? That's the first encouraging Consideration; consider yourselves as always in the Presence and under the Eye of God, to observe to support you.

2. *Secondly*, Consider for your Encouragement, the certainty of Success in the Work of Mortification. This Consideration, if duly ponder'd, is of it self able to outface all Difficulties. A Christian's Victories have nothing of Chance in them, 'tis not to be ascribed to the Fortune of the day when he prevails: Success is chain'd to his Endeavours, and unless he betray his own Soul, and will himself be vanquish'd, he cannot but conquer: And would you wish a greater Advantage than to have Success at your Pleasure? Victory it self was never yet list'd under any but a Christian's Command: Other Conquerours have found it very fickle and unconstant; but herein is the Christian more than a Conquerour, because always sure of Conquest, if himself pleaseth. This indeed will cost much pains, it will make the Heart pant, and the Soul run down with sweat; Success is certain, but not without your utmost Struglings and earnest Endeavours. Let not lazy Christians ever think they shall be more than Conquerours, while they use only drowsy and yawning Desires, and with that such a Lust were weakned, that such a Corruption were mortified and subdued, but never rouse up their Graces  
against



against them; 'tis no wonder we see them so often foyl'd and captivated. Believe it, certainty of Success is not entail'd upon those weak Velleities and effeminate Wishes that are so frequent in the Mouths of many; Oh! that I were freed from the Power of such a Lust; Oh! that such a Temptation might never more assault me; Oh! that I might live as free from Sin as the Angels do in Heaven: Truly these are but sleepy and gaping Desires, neither strong enough to lift the old Man up to the Cross, nor sharp enough to pierce him to the Heart; Corruption though it be thus curst will live long. If this were all you could do, truly God had call'd you forth to a very unequal Combat, even to deliver you into the Hands of your Lusts. Hath he bestowed his Grace and his Spirit upon you for this? Was it only to make the Triumph of your Corruptions the more conspicuous, and your Defeats the more shameful? Was it that you should sit still, and by a wretched Sloth betray both your selves and them? No, certainly they were given you to conquer, and there is no Corruption but they would conquer if you your selves would. It doth ill become a Christian to whine and shrink at the sight of that numerous Host of Corruptions that incamp against him: Be but conscious of thy own Strength, nay, rather of the Strength of God engaged for thee. Dost thou not see more for thee than against thee? There's not one of these but thou mayst look upon as a dead Lust, delivered into thy Hand for the Slaughter; and  
if

if thou sufferest it to escape alive, God may say to thee as *Ahab* to *Benhadad*, *because thou hast let go, out of thine hands a Lust that I appointed to utter Destruction, therefore thy Life shall go for the Life of it.* So then Corruption is in your own Power, it is delivered up to you to be mortified: though it be in your Hearts to tempt and trouble you, yet it is in your Hands to slaughter it. Consider but two or three things.

- I. *First*, Corruption be it never so strong and violent cannot prevail over you, without first asking and waiting for the consent of your own Wills. All its Victories are but precarious and beggarly Atchievements, gotten rather by Insinuation, Flattery and Importunity, than by clear Force. It must sollicite the Affections, cozen the Understanding, ask leave of the Will, e'er it prevail. And therefore the Apostle saith, *Rom. 6. 13. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness to Sin*; implying that if they do become Instruments to Sin, they are voluntarily yielded up unto it. Believe it, there's no force nor violence offer'd you, you are not compelled to sin; all that a Temptation can do is to persuade you, it cannot constrain you to sin whether you will or no. When Corruption storms most and swells highest, when Satan assaults you fiercest, yet after all, you are free and at your own dispose, especially if sanctified, and there is no deliberate Temptation unto Sin, but you may resist it if you will; if you can but find in your Hearts to deny a

Cor-

Corruption, you do mortifie that Corruption. Now would you wish to deal with better Enemies than these are, that must ask us leave before they can hurt us; that must entreat and petition us to be wounded, to be captivated, to be abused by them? Truly such are our own Lusts: As terrible and as dreadful as they seem to us, yet indeed they are the most contemptible, slight, impotent Adversaries in the World, were we but true to our own Souls. But it's this that gives Corruption all its Power; you will sin, you will yield to Temptations, you will betray your Souls, and then you cry out of the Power of Lusts; Oh! their irresistible Violence, I cannot stand against them, they will break in upon me, they will prevail, they will be obeyed, and I cannot help it. They will, and thou canst not help it! For shame, O Christian, if thou wilt, thou canst help it. Didst thou ever sin but that thou wert willing to it? Though there may be some renitency and reluctancy from Grace; in respect of which the Apostle tells us, *that he did what he would not do, yea, what he hated, Rom. 7. 19.* Yet there is also a voluntariness in every Sin; thou yieldest thy self to it, and givest it leave to wound thy Conscience, to ruin thy Soul, and thou wilt have it so. It is this is the Strength of Corruption, Men will be conquer'd and captivated by it. Never tell me your Corruptions are such as you cannot subdue, there is no such Corruption, the most prevailing, the most tumultuating may be mortified by you, if you your selves will. Now in a Temptation



on always think of this ; why should I yield ? What reason is there ? What excuse can I have ? I am not yet necessitated ; I am not compelled to sin ; my Provision is not yet all spent ; my Heart is impregnable unless I desert or dismantle it. I may if I will still stand it out, and be certain of the Conquest : Shall I wilfully give up my Soul, my Darling to the Devourer ? Shall I my self open these everlasting Gates at which Satan now knocks indeed, but cannot force ? I can choose whether this Temptation shall ever prevail ; an absolute denial, a peremptory no, would now silence it. Certainly did you but actually dwell upon this Thought in a Temptation, it would shame you from gratifying many a Corruption that now you do. And then,

2. *Secondly*, Consider the prevailing Nature of Grace. It is from this that your Endeavours after Mortification are accompanied with certainty of Success. Grace is an immortal Seed that will certainly sprout up and flourish in to Glory ; it is a living Fountain that will certainly flow and bubble up into everlasting Life ; it is a Ray of heavenly Light that will scatter and triumph over Darkness, and wax brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. It is Immortal in a Seed, Victorious in a Spark, Triumphant in its Dawning. It hath a kind of Omnipotency in it. *Philip. 4. 13. I can do all things through Christ strengthening of me ;* strengthening me by his prevailing Grace : And no wonder, since it is a Particle of the Divine Nature in self, *2 Pet. 1. 4. That you might be partakers*

of the Divine Nature. It is an indeble Flourish of the Divine Essence, which sets the Gloss of the Divine Attributes upon the Soul, and makes it of kin to God himself. Yea, take Grace when it is at the weakest, when this Dawn is clouded, when this Spark is twinkling, when this Seed seems unspirited, yet then it is Victorious and Triumphant; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but always mighty through God, 2 Cor. 10. 4.* Now what an over-match is this for Corruption, to set Grace against Sin; why it is to set God against Satan, Heaven against Hell, Spirit against Flesh. Now will you desire greater Advantage than this is? Can you wish for greater Encouragement? Oh! how faint-hearted must they needs be, whom certainty of prevailing cannot animate to contend: Who would not fight that hath such odds? Am I certain to prevail? Have I that Principle in me that will go forth conquering unto Conquer? Will it assuredly crown my Soul with Victory, and shall I not bring it to the Trial? Here's now a Corruption molests me, shall I suffer it to captivate me, while yet I have that Divine Auxiliary within, that if brought forth would certainly overcome it? Nay, I must detain this Grace in Unrighteousness, I must depress it, I must keep it under by Violence, if I do not prevail by it. Nay, if I strive not against my Lusts, I must strive against my Graces; and what! shall I take as much pains to commit a Sin, as would serve to subdue it? Oh Christians! it is the greatest shame in the World for you to be overcome and worsted; you that have such an active victorious Principle, a Principle which you your selves must much wrong and injure, if it doth not always conquer; a Principle that riseth with a natural and spontaneous force and Impe-

thus against Corruption, and if but owned, if but cherisht; nay, if not resisted and opposed will certainly subdue it. What shall we think when we see such as you foil'd, but that there is Treachery within? You conspire against your own Grace, you keep it under, you check and curb it, would with a sprightly and æthereal Impulse rush upon and beat down the strongest Lusts that oppose it.

3. *Thirdly*, Consider, the greatest Strength and Power of Corruption is already destroyed, before you are put upon the Mortification of it. It hath already lost its reigning Power in you, and now it retains only its molesting; it hath already lost the Power of a King, and now it only retains the Power of a Rebel. Your old Man is already crucified, it now wants nothing but piercing: It is with *Abshalom* hung up, and wants nothing but to be thrust through. So tender is our God of us that he will not venture us against Corruption while it is in its full Strength. Alas! while Corruption is intire and unbroken, we are unable to grapple with it; he himself therefore crusheth the Head of this Serpent, and breaks the Teeth of this Lion; and when it is thus weakned, he calls upon us to destroy it. God might, if he had so pleased, at once have made a full end of Corruption; and in our Regeneration as perfectly have freed us from it, as we shall be hereafter in Heaven. No, but he would not so take the whole Work out of our Hands; we must exercise our Courage and our Resolution against it, and therefore he so far weakned it, that it might not destroy us, though still it be left so strong and powerful as to molest and trouble us. So that you see in these three things, Success is assured to your Endeavours: you cannot say Corruption is unmatchable



matchable in its Strength, irresistible in its Violence, that we cannot stand before it; no, you shall certainly prevail and overcome it, if you will but encounter it; and what an Encouragement is this!

*Thirdly*, Another encouraging Consideration 3. is this, the longer thou continuest mortifying the weaker will Corruption grow, and the easier thou wilt find this great Work to be. Would you be freed from the continual vexing Importunity of Corruption? It now haunts and dogs you, and clamours to be gratified in this and in that Sin, and you can find no rest from it; beware how you go about to satisfy it, for believe it, that doth but the more enrage it. *Solomon's* insatiates are moderate in respect of this, it still cries give, give, and the more you give it, the louder still and the more eagerly it cries. Have you not found that after yielding to this Importunity, Corruption hath been more fierce than ever before; it's an impudent Craver that knows neither Bounds nor Modesty. You may as well quench Fire with Oil, as satisfy Corruption with sinning; no, if you would in any measure be free from this perpetual trouble, use it frowardly; deny, reject it, spurn this Body of Sin and Death; this at last will discountenance and discourage it from tempting; it will at last leave following thee as one inexorable. Trust the Experience of the Children of God in this particular, they will tell thee, that such and such a prevailing Lust that did use perpetually to perplex and disquiet them, which they feared they should never master; yet by often vexing, crossing and contradicting of it, they have at length tamed it, it being brought under Command, and made subject to Grace; and that though indeed there would remain still some

grudgings of the Distemper, yet it hath been less frequent and less violent in its working. Conclude upon it that this thou also mayst attain unto. Doth any imperious Lust perplex and trouble thee? Believe it, through the daily Exercise of Mortification thou wilt so tire it out and spend it, that though it may murmur and repine sometimes, and grudge that it is not satisfied; yet it shall seldom prevail to disturb thy Communion with God, and never so far prevail as to destroy thy Peace and Comfort. Then,

4. *Fourthly*, Consider that there is in the Exercise of Mortification (though it be so sharp and severe a Duty) an inward secret Satisfaction of Soul, that doth more than recompence all the Pains and Difficulty. There is a hidden Complacency even in cutting off of right Hands, and plucking out of right Eyes. There is a double Nature in every Child of God, the divine Nature, and the corrupt Nature; and that which is a Torment to one is a Pleasure to the other. The divine Nature takes as much Pleasure in mortifying a Corruption, as the corrupt Nature doth in gratifying of it. I wonder therefore how rational Christians are to be deterred from the Work of Mortification by the harshness and painfulness of the Work. If you have no Nature in you but corrupt, how are you Christians? If you have, think you it is not as painful and as harsh to your new Nature that you yield to a Lust, as it is to your corrupt Nature that you oppose and mortify it? Yes, the new Nature groans and sighs, and mourns in secret within when you sin against it; oh! but it leaps for Joy, it springs and exults in the Heart when you disappoint a Temptation, and prevail against Corruptions; it smiles upon you when you return red from the Slaughter.

Slaughter. I appeal to Experience, tell me, have you not found more ravishing Joy and Pleasure in that still insinuating soft Delight, that spills it self silently through the Soul, while you have been vigorously struggling against your Corruptions, than ever you found in yielding to them? Though the contest be troublesome, yet what a calm follows when Grace obtains the Victory, not a ruffle, not a wrinkle upon the Face of the Soul; oh! how sweetly doth it then enjoy both it self and its God, it twines about him, closely embraceth him, claspeth Hands with him, and then follow those unexpressible mutual Congratulations for the Success. Oh! my Soul, enter thou into this Joy. If Lust prevail, the Pleasure may blaze high, but it is impure, dreggy, mixt, and hath in it more of the Sting than the Honey, besides those many thousand Stings it leaves behind in the Conscience. Now baffle a Corruption by that very Argument that it doth chiefly make use of. What is that which Lust useth to plead when it tempts? Is it not Pleasure? This is its most taking bait: Well then, when it tells thee thou shalt have so much Pleasure in it, 'twill bring thee in such an over-flowing Measure of Satisfaction and Delight: oh! then answer it; yes, I can have better Satisfaction, and more sincere Delight in mortifying of it, that will bring me in pure Spiritual, clarified Joy; and shall I forgoe this, for the muddy, impure, short Blaze of sinful Pleasure? Thus encourage now thy self unto this great Duty.

*Fifthly And Lastly,* Consider for thy encouragement that this Work of Mortification is but for a short time, for a few stormy Winter days that will soon be blown over. Though it must be a constant Work while it lasts, yet it is not to last long. 5.



long. Death at last will come in for our Relief. Look how the scorched Traveller longs for a Shade to rest in, so doth a truly mortified Christian long to repose himself in the Shadow of Death; there he shall lie free from the scorchings of Temptations, and the heat and swelter of Corruption. It will not, it cannot be long e'er it shall be sung over us, your Warfare is accomplished. Though now we are kicking against the Prickles, yet we shall shortly be crowned with Roses. Our Comfort is, that not a Corruption shall enter into Heaven with us, there to tempt or molest us. And therefore we should not faint nor be weary; though our Work be sharp, yet it is but short, and our Rest is everlasting.

Now be continually arming and strengthening your selves with such encouraging Considerations as these are. You will find them to be of very great Moment and Influence in the carrying on of the Work of Mortification. That's the fourth Direction,

5. *Fifthly*, Another Direction shall be this, if you would mortifie your Corruptions, then labour to improve the Death of Christ unto the Death of Sin. There is Vertue in the Blood of Christ to stench the bloody Issue of Corruption: He was wounded and crucified for Sin, and Sin was wounded and crucified with him. And thus Christ doth by a holy kind of Revenge repay his Death upon the old Man that put him to Death. And therefore says the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 6. Our old Man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed.* And in the former verses he speaks of *being baptized into the Death of Christ, and planted together into the likeness of his Death.* All which intimates the Death of Sin to be inflicted by the Death of Christ. Look as Mo-  
ses

ses healed the Bitterness of the Waters of *Marah* by casting a Tree into them; so truly that bitter Fountain of Corruption, which always sends forth bitter Streams is healed by the Tree of the Cross. Make it therefore your daily Exercise to bring the Cross of Christ into your Hearts, to nail and fasten your Lusts unto it, and you shall quickly find them languish and expire. If you ask what Influence the Death of Christ hath into the Death of Sin. I answer, it hath mighty Influence especially these two ways. As it is the meritorious Cause of, and as it is the moving Cause unto Mortification.

*First*, The Death and Cross of Christ is the meritorious Cause of Mortification. Then was the Death of Sin procured and purchased. We should always have lived Vassals and Bond-slaves to our Lusts, still subject to them, and kept under by them, but that Christ by dying hath redeemed us from their Power, and hath laid in store for us that Grace whereby we are enabled to resist and prevail. Believe it, there is not a Victory that you obtain but it cost Blood, not your own indeed, but the precious Blood of Jesus Christ. What a Privilege hath a Christian in this? He conflicts, and conquers, and triumphs at the expence of another's Blood. There's not a Temptation you resist, nor a Corruption you subdue, but the Grace that enables you hereunto is the purchase of your Saviour's Death. By Death he destroyed him that had the Power of Death. By Faith therefore draw continual Supplies from the Death of Christ: Tell him how Rebellious and Head-strong thy Corruptions are grown, what Tumults and Uproars they make in thy Heart. Tell him it was one End and Intent of his Death that they might be destroyed in thee. Beg of him Relief and Strength against them; plead with him, that since he hath procured the Death of Sin at so high and dear a Rate as his own Blood, he would not suffer it to live unmortified in thee. Christ by his Sufferings hath procured Grace sufficient to make us more than Conquerours: Now it is the Skill and Art of Faith to derive from this full Treasury, Supplies for Mortification.

*Secondly*, The Death of Christ hath a mighty Influence into our Mortification, as it is the moving Cause unto it. Certainly if you do but seriously reflect upon the Death of Christ, and consider that all the Pains, Wrath, and Curse he then underwent was to free you from your Sins; it cannot but embitter your Hearts against it: What! shall I suffer Sin in me that would not suffer Christ to live in the World? Was he crucified for it, and shall not I be crucified unto it?

it? Oh! say concerning thy Corruptions, it was this and that base Lust of mine that kill'd my Saviour; it was this and this Sin that squeez'd so much Gall and Wormwood into the bitter Cup of his Sufferings; I see them stained with his Blood, they look guilty of his Death; and shall I lodge in my Heart the bloody Murderers of my Saviour? No, their Blood certainly shall go for his. This Consideration, had I time to press it upon you, would be of great Moment unto the Exercise of Mortification.

Thus I have at large handled to you this great and important Duty of Mortification. 'Tis not that which concerns only some particular Christians: 'Tis not that which is to be exercised only at some particular and especial Seasons: 'Tis not that which conduceth only to the Ornament and Flourish of a Christian? No, it is that which is the very Life and Power of Christianity, without which whatsoever Profession you glitter in, and dazle the Eyes of the World with, it is but empty and hypocritical. If any of these Truths have taken hold upon your Consciences, beware how you shift them off, lest with them you together shift off eternal Life, and judge your selves unworthy of it. I know it is indeed a hard Duty, and I have endeavoured to arm you against that Prejudice; but pray tell me, is it not more hard to perish? Is it not more hard to lie in Hell for ever? Though it be pleasing to Flesh and Blood to live in Sin, and to give Corruption Scope to act unopposed and unresisted: Oh! but think, will it be pleasing to Flesh and Blood to lie for ever scorching in eternal Burnings. Never flatter your selves, you or your Sins must die; *If ye live after the Flesh ye shall die.* If after all that hath been spoken you will yet indulge your Lusts, and yield to Temptations, and give your selves over to the swing of your Corruptions; believe it, these Sermons will rise up and witness against you at the last day, and leave you without excuse. You have been told what the Duty is, how necessary, the way and means how you should perform it: and oh! that these things might never be objected against you for your Condemnation! Oh! that they might become effectual to promote that great Work in you, till that Promise be fulfilled to you in the Text, *If ye mortifie, ye shall live.*

II MAGI

FINIS.



d  
is  
n-  
th  
ge  
o,  
n,  
nt

m-  
on-  
ch  
ea-  
ent  
ve-  
oe-  
the  
of  
are  
nft

I  
to  
not  
for  
e in  
un-  
and  
ever  
af-  
ken  
ons,  
ons;  
nft  
You  
away  
hete  
tem-  
note  
you



